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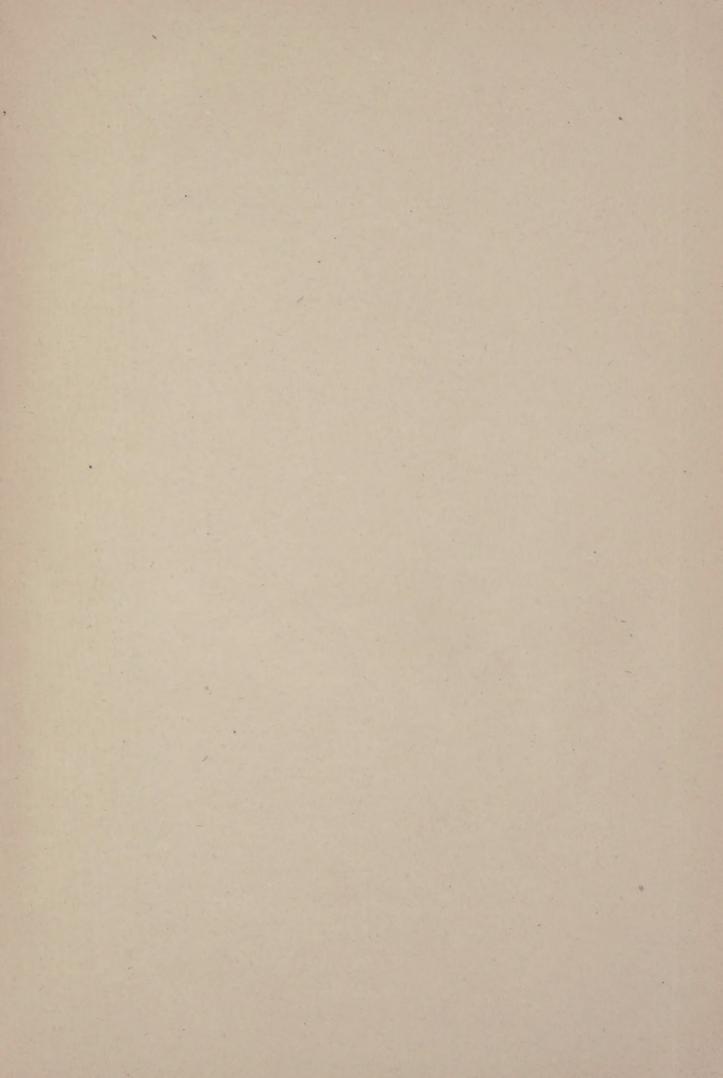
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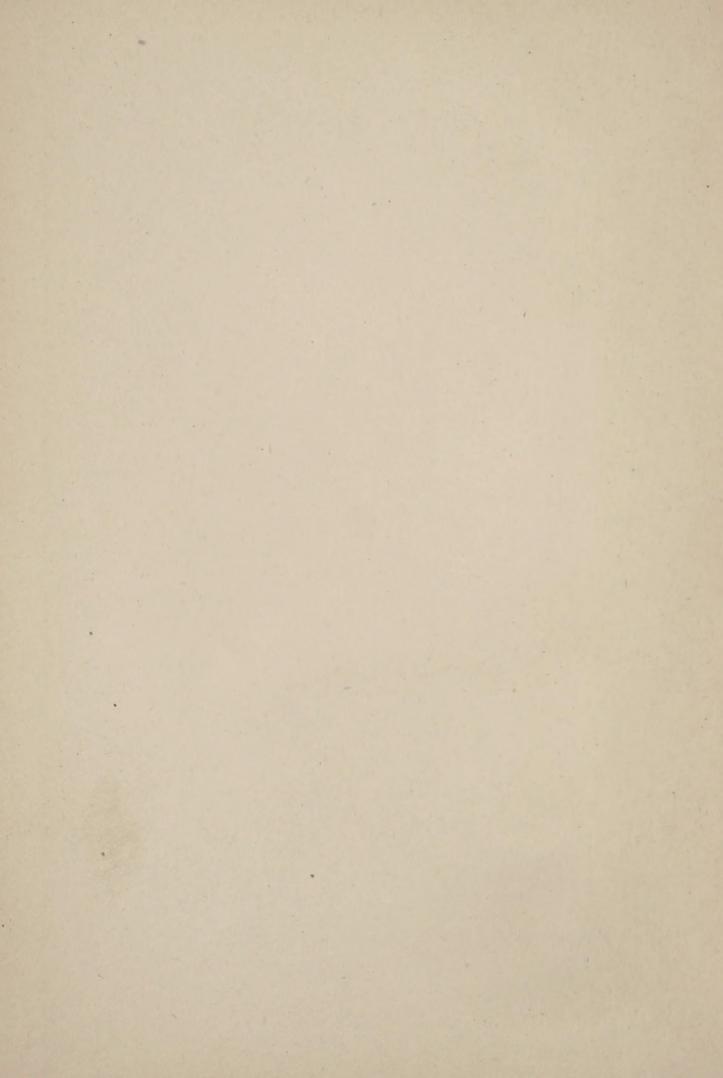
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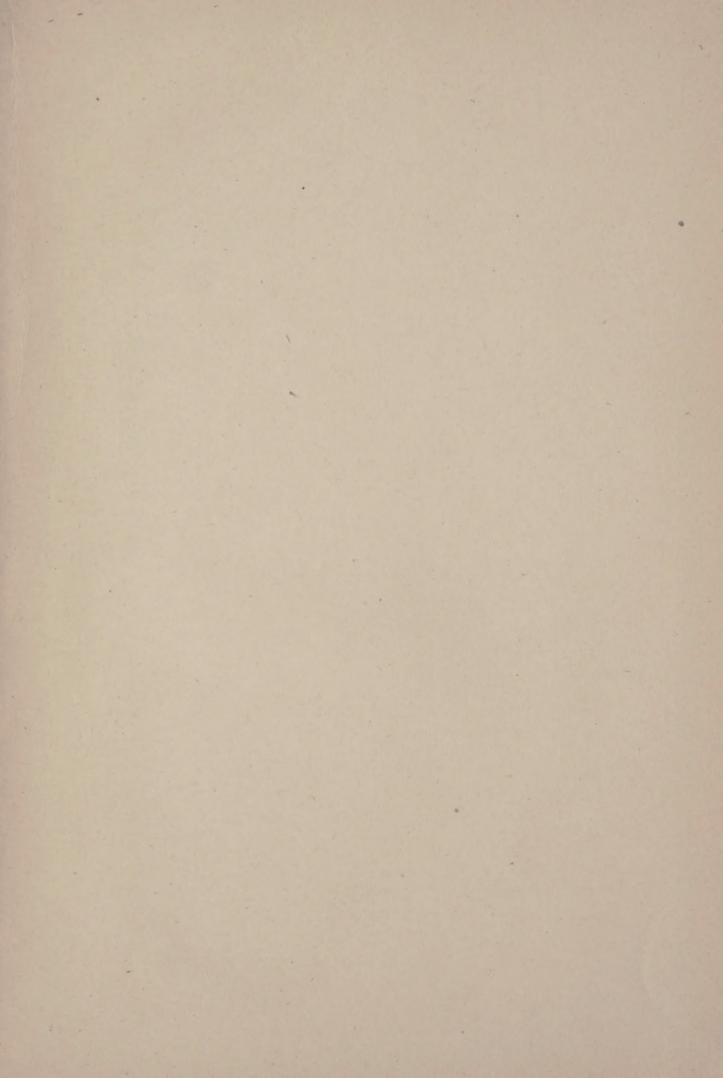
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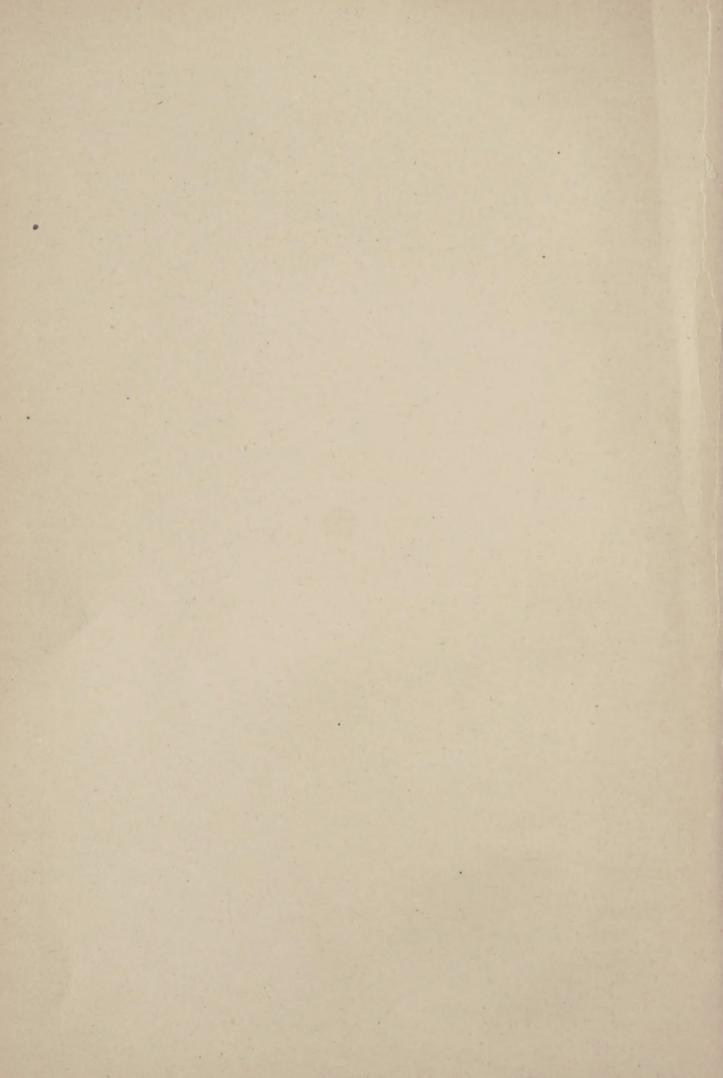


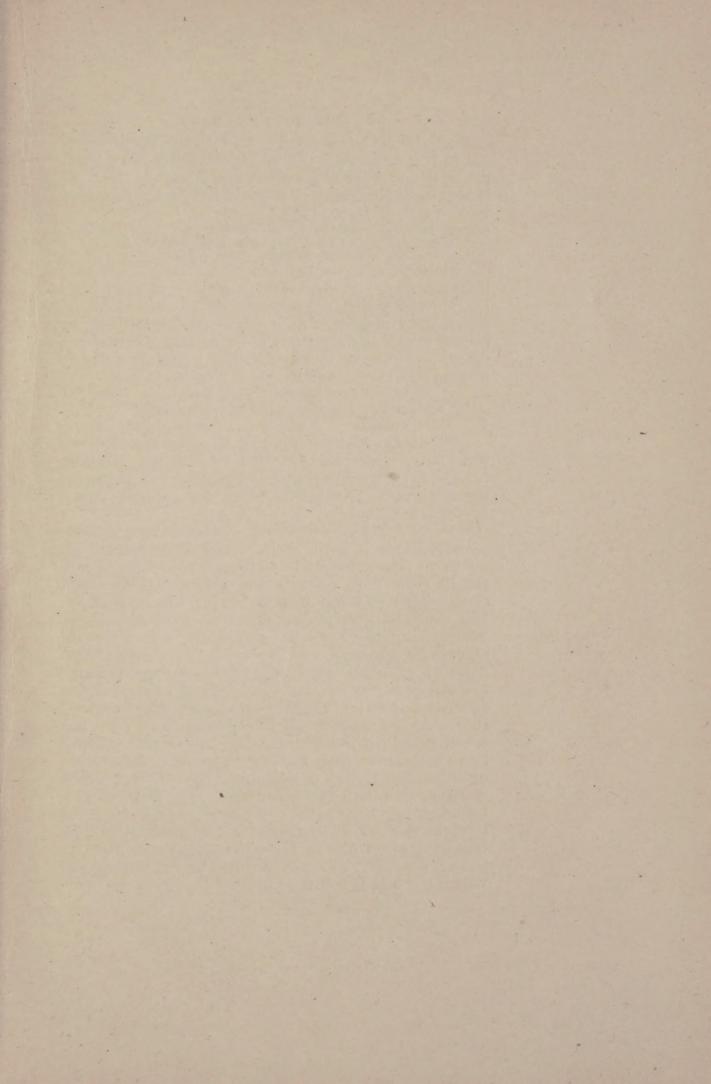












These books are at the head of the Miscellaneous list in the "Annotated, graded, classified and priced list of books suitable for elementary school libraries" issued by the Education department of the State of New York, Feb. 15, 1912.

(From the Bibliography of Education for 1894, James 1. Wyer, Jr., now New York state librarian, in Educational Review, June, 1905)

"Fiction has never before been given place in this bibliography, but these stories are so manifestly the product of a rich experience and so full of sound sense, their abundant and obtrusive 'morals' are so salutary and their portrayal of certain educational shams and evils so vivid, that they certainly deserve serious reading by teachers and trustees."

"The author has the gift of narration."

(From the Brooklyn Eagle, June 1, 1912)

"What Du Maurier did for the intimate life of the artist, Boucicault for the Irish rebel, Kipling for the British soldier, and Conally for the Gloucester fisherman, Bardeen is doing for the every-day life of the school."

(From the Pedagogical Seminary, G. Stanley Hall, Editor) "Mr. Bardeen is the story writer of American education. He has already written three books of stories of New York Schools, and here prints six short ones. To our mind this is by far his best book. His style is utterly unpretentious and sometimes homely, but there is a sense of reality about the incidents he portrays, and his writings embody the results of so much keen observation of the character and psychic processes of teachers and everything is described as so real that the stories are most impressive. At the crisis when Paul Pembroke's fortunes are changed for the better, when he protests before a large commencement audience against a fraudulent diploma, the victory of Sears over the Alpha Upsilon Society, and the triumph of Miss Trumbull are profoundly moving. In the story of the haunted school-room we have almost a contribution to hystero-neurosis, while in Miss Fothergill's protest we have a character of a pushing but unscrupulous girl which we fear is too true to life."

COYKENDALL WEBB

AND OTHER

STORIES ABOUT SCHOOLS

C. BARDEEN

Editor of the School Bulletin



SYRACUSE, N. Y.

C. W. BARDEEN, PUBLISHER

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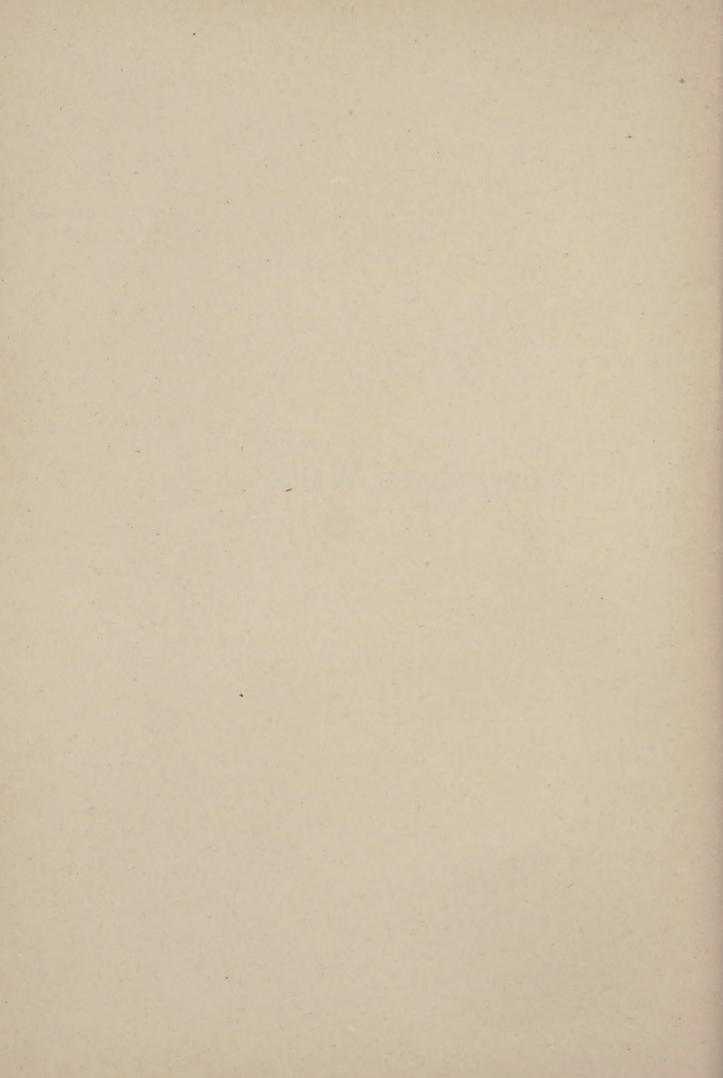
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COYKENDALL WEBB



COYKENDALL WEBB

Coy Webb and Mr. Kendall, both teachers in the Ipswich technical high, had identical names. Their twin fathers had married twins, and the double wedding had been followed by two years of happy intercourse. But it had been agreed that the first boy born in either family should . be named Coykendall for his maternal grandfather, and when indications arose in both families at about the same time there was rivalry, first joking, then serious, then intense, then bitter. When Coy appeared his uucle and aunt refused to attend the christening, even to see him; and when three weeks later a boy came to the other couple and was also named Coykendall

a feud was established that outlived all four parents. They never visited, when they met they bowed coldly, they never spoke if they could help it to or of one another, each couple simply ignored the other's existence.

Each couple always addressed and spoke of their son by his full name, Coykendall. There were no pet names, no abbreviations. It was Coykendall who nursed at his mother's bosom, Coykendall who was tucked away in bed, Coykendall who grew up. The two boys went to the same school, for it was part of the ignoring that neither should be prevented from anything because the other was to do it. Their playmates soon differentiated them, calling them so persistently Coy and Kendall that to all but their parents those were the recognized names. They went on to the same

class in the same college where their fathers were graduated, still ignoring each other as each pair of parents ignored the other pair. All four of their parents died while the boys were in college, but no one of either family attended either funeral in the other. The parents left little property, but Grandfather Coykendall had provided for the boys' education. When the four years were finished both had to earn a living, and both got places in the Ipswich school.

II

In many ways they were as identical as their names. They were of the same height and build, had voices that in another room could not be distinguished, had the same colored eyes and hair, abounded in little physical peculiarities of appearance and manner that distinguished either from

anybody else. They even wrote almost an identical hand, having mastered in school the movement method of penmanship and writing with rapidity and beauty.

But every year they grew different in disposition. Coy was hale fellow well met, a good mixer, with an appealing smile that made friends at sight. Kendall was reserved, suspicious, distrustful, selfconscious. Coy was the most popular man in the class. Kendall had no intimates, and only such acquaintances as would not be kept at arm's length. Coy was always trim in attire and appearance. Kendall was careless and became slouchy. Coy kept his face clean-shaved. Kendall let a straggling beard cover his countenance like devil's paintbrush. Coy was optimistic, hopeful, cheerful. Kendall looked for the worst and found it. So it was not

strange that in the same school Coy was given a place near the top while Kendall had to do elementary work at two-thirds as much salary.

III

One July after school closed Kendall wandered off west, finally reaching Chicago. When he was ready to return he found every berth had been sold. As he turned away with his usual disgust a man three or four back in the line fell out and beckoned him to one side. It was Coy, who offered his hand. "As it happens, Kendall," he said, "I have an extra ticket. Ellis James was going with me, but is detained. If you will take his half the section it will accommodate me. I was just going to ask to give it up."

Tears came into Kendall's eyes. "I would rather take a favor from you than

from any other man in the world," he said.

"How foolish we have been all these years," returned Coy, his own eyes not dry.

IV

They went to the car, and finding the smoking-room unoccupied sat there till long after the berths had been made up. In the twenty-six years they had been cousins they had never before spoken to each other except formally. Now the gates were loosened, and they made up for lost time. But it was Coy who did most of the talking, and tonight it seemed as if he told everything. He enjoyed jokes on himself and related his experiences with a frankness that made them irresistibly funny. What especially impressed Kendall was his kindliness—he seemed to have divined the best in everybody.

By and by the special reason for his joyousness appeared. "Kendall," he said, "I am going to tell you a secret that you will be the first third party to know; the night I came away from Ipswich Myrtice Carlow promised to marry me."

Myrtice Carlow too. She was the one girl in all the world Kendall had hopelessly longed to marry, and now she had dropped easily enough into his cousin's already full lap. Well, he never could have got her himself and he would be no dog in the manger, so he congratulated Coy with sincerity, and climbed into his berth wondering why all the prizes fell in bunches.

V

When he awoke he was in a hospital, his head bandaged, a nurse watching him intently, her eyes lighting up as she saw he was conscious. It was explained to him

little by little. The train at sixty miles an hour had run into a freight, and he was the only one in his car who had survived.

"And Coy?" he started to inquire, but his habit of reticence prevailed. If all the others were dead Coy must be dead: why show his grief to a hired nurse? So he listened to all that was told him, but volunteered no information and answered questions cautiously. It was his story: he had no disposition to share it with Tom, Dick, and Harry.

But a complication arose. He discovered that he was supposed to be Coy. Ellis James had telegraphed for news, and when reply came that Coykendall Webb was saved sent word to Ipswich that Coy was in the hospital. A letter came to him from the president of the Ipswich board telling that the chemistry department.

was now open and would be held for him till he could apply in person. It was addressed to Mr. Coykendall Webb but of course was meant for Coy. It showed an accustomed friendliness, and this man had always manifested dislike for Kendall. How Kendall would have liked that place. As a matter of fact he was in scholarship better fitted for it than Coy; his marks in college had been much higher. And it was work he would enjoy so much better than patching up these raw entering students in the fundamentals. But it was Coy's personality they wanted. No wonder: Coy was a fine fellow. He had so enjoyed Coy's frank humor that fatal night. If he had been intimate with Coy all these years he might have picked up something of his manner instead of secreting a crust about himself.

VI

The first day he was allowed to wander down stairs he had a shock. As he turned to enter the reception room there was Coy coming to meet him. "Why, Coy!" he cried, with a joy he had never before known, and Coy stretched out his hand as eagerly. He touched the glass before he discovered that he had approached a full-length mirror.

But how could he look so like Coy? He came back to the mirror. He had never been fond of his own face and had seldom seen it except for the hasty glance he gave when he parted his hair by three or four strokes of military brushes. He knew in a general way that in preparation for the operation on his face they had shaved his beard and had kept it shaved, but he had not had curiosity to see how it altered his

appearance. He saw now that the smooth face and the trimmed hair made him look much more like Coy than like himself, especially as he wore a well-fitting coat of Coy's that by some capricious miracle had been saved from the wreck. Poor old Coy: to think that even his wraith should have been preserved, with such an unworthy substitute to inhabit it.

VII

His reserve had kept him from saying anything of this; fortunately no one had observed his approaching the mirror or heard his cry of joy. But he reflected upon it a great deal, and the thought gradually took form. "Why not be Coy?" How differently he should go back to the old life at Ipswich with Coy's friends and traditions instead of his own isolation behind him. It would be easy enough.

Nobody knew he had gone to Chicago, much less that he was returning by this train. The Pullman records would show only Ellis James's name, and Ellis was known to have staid behind. He was already recognized here as Coy, they would be looking for Coy at Ipswich, the two were so identical in appearance that he had mistaken himself for Coy, he would have Coy's clothes, his voice was the same, any little differences would be accounted for as effects of the accident, the scar left on his face, distinct but not disfiguring, would prevent too close a study of his features—yes, physically he could take Coy's place.

But in mind and disposition? That was not so easy. Coy was quicker of perception and expression and of readier humor; there would be a difference there, but people would attribute it to the shock.

As to disposition? He felt as though he had seen a great light on the train. Coy expected everybody to be friendly and addressed everybody confidently. That was so much wiser than to hold back as he had done till the other person should unmistakably offer his hand. He would go back to Ipswich with Coy's prestige and with Coy's open hand. He would expect people to be glad to see him, and he would be glad to see them.

VIII

How about Myrtice Carlow? A little note had come addressed to Mr. Coykendall Webb. He knew it was from Myrtice and he had felt he had no right to open it. That from the member of the board was different; he had read that unhesitatingly. But Myrtice's was a love letter; it was sacred.

Yet Myrtice was involved in this assumption of Coy's place. If he went back as Coy he must go back engaged to Myrtice. Could he do it? A man might deceive the rest of the city, but would not the woman who loved recognize the impostor? She might allow much for the accident, but could an identity deceive her?

Then there was the general question, had he the right to take Coy's place? It was not like taking it away; he would never have dreamed of that: he would give his right hand today to have Coy back in life. But Coy was gone. That brilliant young career was ended and would soon be forgotten. If he could take it up and carry it on worthily, eliminating his own unhappy individuality, was it not in a way a sacrifice for Coy, an obliteration of himself to continue his cousin's career?

Eventually this conviction prevailed, and he opened Myrtice's letter. It was brief. "My own," it said, "you know what the joy was that I got the telegram of your safety before I knew of your danger. O that I could come to you. How impatiently I wait for you." Suppose he should go to her and say, "I am sorry, but it was Kendall who was saved. Coy was burned to death." Who would have the courage to tell her that? He could not be to her all that Coy would have been, but how he would devote his life to her.

IX

So he went back as Coy, was welcomed as Coy, was appointed to the chemistry department as Coy, married Myrtice as Coy. People wondered what had become of Kendall, but only for a week or two. He had wandered west somewhere and had

gone off on some wild-goose chase probably; he was always queer.

But Coy fitted in fairly well; not quite the same, but then think of the shock of such an awful accident. He tried to be friendly, frank, trustful, and grew in that direction. He was generally liked.

At home there were anxious moments. Sometimes when he did not respond as expected he saw Myrtice's eyes look puzzled; he knew he was not quite meeting her expectations. But he was a loyal husband, putting her happiness before anything else in the world; if he did not feel the full union he had hoped for he was willing to wait for it, and was at least determined to deserve it.

And it came. One night after supper she had curled herself up in his lap and whispered something in his ear. He looked at her with wondering joy and when he clasped her in his arms he knew she was wholly his. The triumph was exultation so tumultuous that when she was gone to bed he went out into the night to work off the excitement in a long walk.

X

It was pitch-dark, but as he passed under a street light a man confronted him and dropped the overcoat that concealed his face. "Good God!" cried Kendall, "Coy!"

This time it was no mirror. There stood Coy, pale, worn, bitter, but Coy. Kendall's first thought was for Myrtice. "Cover your face quickly," he said, "and come with me to the schoolhouse."

Coy obeyed silently, and Kendall entered by a private door that led to a laboratory he often used at night. "Now tell

me how it happened," he cried. "They said I was the only survivor in the car."

"And you stole my name, my work, and my wife," said Coy, bitterly.

"No, I gave up my own name and identity to preserve yours which would otherwise have disappeared, as I supposed I am ready to give them all back to you. Come with me tonight to New York, get a face specialist to carve this scar on your face, and come back to your place in my clothes. I promise never to be seen again."

"And make Myrtice an unconscious adulteress," sneered Coy, bitterly.

"True. You must come back in my name and after I am dead. Listen, Coy. Not an hour ago Myrtice told me that she hopes to become a mother. Let that happen: there ought to be no excitement to disturb her. When she is recovered an

accident will happen to me. Reappear here as Kendall, assume with your own happy personality the place I have filled so unworthily, but be known only by your full name. It is the only way out I see."

XI

Kendall's voice rang true. Coy held out his hand. "I really believe you are glad to see me alive," he said.

"As God is my judge, I am, Coy," and Kendall sobbed. "All I want now is to atone to you and Myrtice."

"You have made Myrtice happy?"

"Not till she told me tonight of the new bond that united us have I felt that I was really accepted by her, but I have tried to be a good husband."

"Then you have been and are and shall be. I came here ready to kill you. I am going away proud of you, proud to have my name borne by you."

"You won't go away?"

"Yes. I wandered off from the train insane with pain, and when I was picked up I had aphasia. It was only last week that I discovered who I was. Nobody could trace me because Coykendall Webb was accounted for, and when I recalled the past I came here before revealing it, not knowing what complications might have arisen. I am glad of that. Myrtice is happy. You will be happy, for I am not only willing but proud that you should continue to represent me."

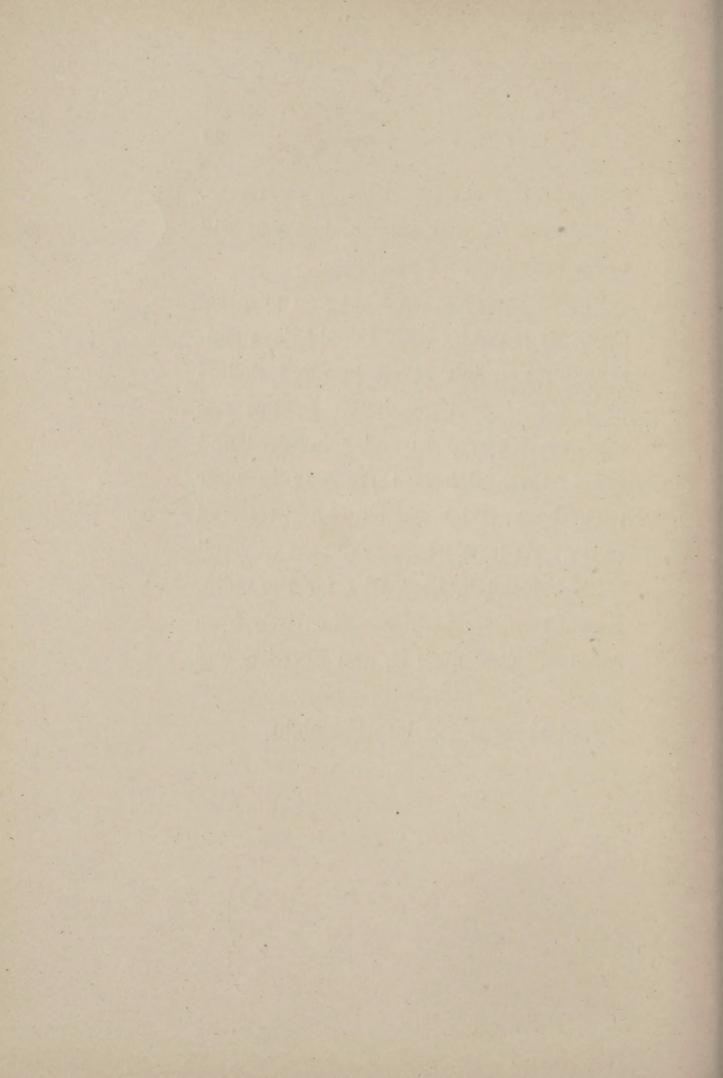
"But stay with us, Coy."

"You will see that is impossible. Kendall Webb has vanished from this community, and must bever be recalled. Myrtice must never have a hint that he has reappeared or she may suspect something. I shall get on well enough, but you will never hear from me again."

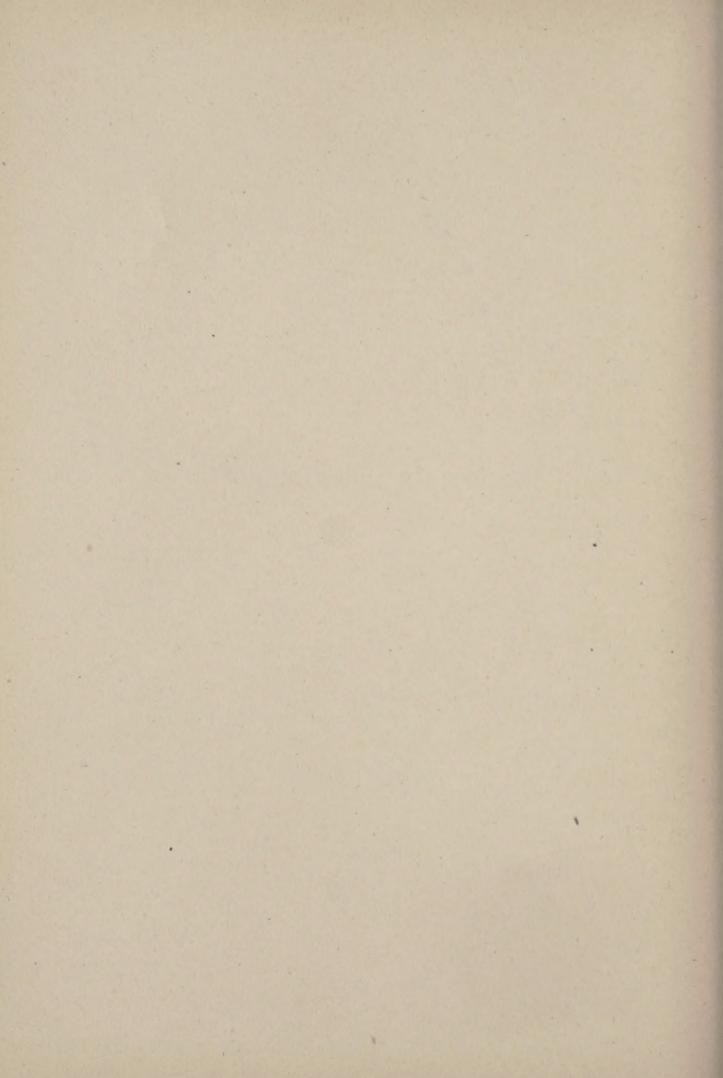
"I can hardly grasp what you propose, Coy. It is nobler than I could have conceived. You left seven hundred dollars in the savings bank here. I have not touched it except to add a hundred and twenty-three dollars there was in your pocketbook, which was found and restored to me. At least let me send that to you."

"No, Kendall, keep that for the child. I want to disassociate myself entirely from Ipswich. God bless it, and Myrtice, and you."

And he went out into the night.



AGATHA'S PRAYER



AGATHA'S PRAYER

I

"Well, how does it seem to you after a month?" asked Mr. Broughton, president of the board. He had taken a liking to this new principal, and addressed him familiarly.

"I have never before been so discouraged," replied Mr. Napier.

"Discipline?"

"Too easy: I wish the pupils were less docile."

"Poor preparation?"

"No, they recite creditably."

"Inattentive?"

"No, they are rather eager in class than otherwise."

"What is the trouble?"

"I haven't formulated it yet: perhaps I can in talking with you. In a way it is that they are always consciously on display intellectually."

"I don't understand."

"I don't myself clearly. But when I am teaching a boy I want his mind to be on the topic, the fact, the method, the reason, whatever he is getting. Now here the boy's mind is primarily on displaying how rapidly he can get it."

"That means close attention."

"But divided attention. I want his mind to be wholly on his work, not partly on how his work impresses me."

"Isn't that a fine distinction?"

"O no. You like good stories, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Which kind of a listener do you prefer, the man who interrupts you before you are through to show that he has guessed the point, and who guffaws and shouts 'That is a good one', or the man who listens quietly with a twinkle in his eye?"

"The latter, of course."

"Because he is absorbed in the story, while the other man is impressing you that he has humor enough to see the point."

"I think I catch your meaning."

"They once gave a play in Latin at Syracuse university. It was the *Trinummus* of Plautus, and copies of the play in the original with the translation were put in the hands of the audience. There are a good many jokes in it, and to show how perfectly he understood the Latin everybody laughed at every joke. When the joke was over the page the audience laugh-

ed before it turned the leaf and before the player had uttered it. Our boys and girls have been taught to do that: to be eager for the credit of understanding things even before they are said, with the natural result that they often do not wait to understand at all."

"In other words they lack sincerity."

"That is exactly the word. What they want is not knowledge but the credit for knowledge."

II

"That is a serious matter. Have you found a cause?"

"Yes."

"A person?"

"Yes."

"Who is it?"

"Mrs. Lushington."

"You surprise me. We look on her as the light of the school."

"Yet this is just her fault. She is always making a window display of her acquirements."

"But they are considerable."

"On the contrary. She is too anxious to show off to take time to really acquire. She has smatterings of a great many things but only a smattering of anything."

"For instance."

"She poses as an art critic. She has walked through the National gallery and the Louvre and the Pitti and she thinks one might safely buy a Botticelli on her judgment. As a matter of fact she got her notes misplaced the other day, and gave her class in mediaeval history a long talk on what she supposed to be an early

Raphael, but was really a modern German madonna."

"Are such instances frequent?"

"I see them every day or two; they must occur almost hourly."

"And that spirit of veneer pervades the school?"

"And will, so long as she is here."

III

"What do you propose?"

"To get rid of her."

"She has been here a long time."

"So the mischief she has done has penetrated deep."

"And I don't know whether she could get another place."

"It is the pupils we must consider."

"She has her contract for the year."

"If you will back me I think we can persuade her to resign." "How?"

"Though I have seen several instances of her parade of ignorance I have not mentioned them, because I consider her hopeless and it would only disturb without helping her. But the time will come when she will make an egregious blunder in the presence of so many people that to be exposed will humiliate her to the point of resigning and disappearing. If you approve I will undertake to discover such an opportunity before Christmas."

"I'll do it, Mr. Napier. It is ruthless, but we must consider the school first."

IV

On the second Friday of October the school gave a reception to the teachers, the pupils, and the public. The board of education provided the refreshments. It had been an annual event for some years,

and gave Mrs. Lushington an opportunity to shine that she much appreciated.

She made the feature of the evening a victrola recently purchased. She chose the records, and prefaced each with a description of the music and of its background.

"This," she said of one of them, "is Agatha's prayer, from Der Freischutz, one of the most touching melodies in all opera. Agatha is about to retire, little guessing that two robbers are hidden in her closet and watching her every movement." She played it through, and added, "See how simply and joyfully she lifts her soul to heaven, and how touchingly the burden of her prayer rises in its religious devotion."

Mr. Napier's eye met Mr. Broughton's fully, and Mr. Broughton nodded.

"Mrs. Lushington," asked Mr. Napier deferently, "are you familiar with the opera of Der Freischutz?"

"O yes," she replied readily, "I saw it once in Paris and once in Florence."

"Are you sure about the robbers and the prayer-scene? Aren't you thinking of Fra Diavolo?"

Mrs. Lushington was annoyed, but she inferred from Mr. Napier's quiet positiveness that he knew, so she replied, "Possibly you are right. I have heard so many operas in this country and in Europe that I sometimes get the plots mixed. It may have been Fra Diavolo. The two are very much alike."

"Are you sure of that? I should say they could hardly be more different. Fra Diavolo is by Auber, one of the lightest of French composers, hardly more than a rather vulgar comic opera. Der Freischutz is the masterpiece of Weber, who founded the romantic school, and deals seriously with the supernatural."

Mrs. Lushington was visibly disturbed, but looking at the record she said, "No, it is Der Freischutz; I thought I was right."

"Yes, the record is unquestionably from Der Freischutz, but Agatha's prayer was uttered under other circumstances. Agatha is left alone and draws the curtains aside, revealing a starlit night, and she prays for the safety of her lover."

"Very likely that is a more exact rendering of my general idea," said Mrs. Lushington, anxious to pass on to another record. "You see how perfectly the music expresses that feeling."

"Unfortunately," Mr. Napier insisted, "that is not Agatha's prayer at all, but an

air preceding, sung by Annetta. While it is a prayer, it is a prayer for a young man, 'Se si vede un giovinotto',

"'Comes a gallant youth towards me,

Be he light or be he dark,

Eyes that flash as he regards me,

Him my captive I will mark."

"Excuse me," said Mrs. Lushington vindictively, "will you kindly examine this record, 'Agatha's prayer. By Marie A. Michaelowa, soprano. In Russian, 61134."

"O yes, that is what the record says, Mrs. Lushington, but the Victrola people have made five thousand records: it is not surprising that they should now and then paste the wrong label on a record. This is Agatha's prayer." And he sat down at the piano and played the well-known church tune.

"It does not seem to me at all likely that the Victrola people are mistaken," protested Mrs. Lushington angrily.

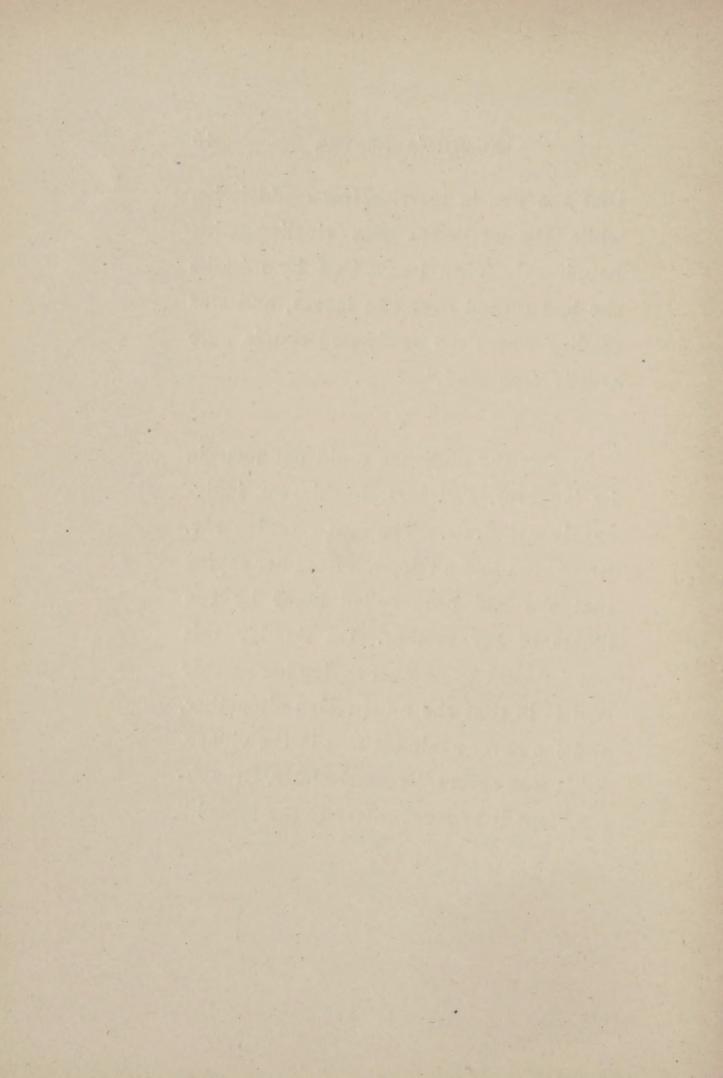
"Let us look at one of their late catalogues," suggested Mr. Napier, and when it was produced he read, "Der Freischutz, Annie's air, 61134". "You see they were much more likely to make a mistake," he said, "than the light and mischievous song of Annetta to represent a prayer.

"To call that a prayer reminds me of an experience I had once in Boston in the old Music hall of the big organ. I was attending a symphony concert one afternoon, where the music was explained in detail in the elaborate programmes. It was a Russian symphony and at the moment the music was gay with the tinkling of sleigh-bells after the wedding. As I glanced at the woman before me I saw that she was in tears. How could it be, while the orchestra was tingling with happiness? Then I saw that by mistake she had turned over two leaves, and was reading where the newly-wed couple were cruelly separated."

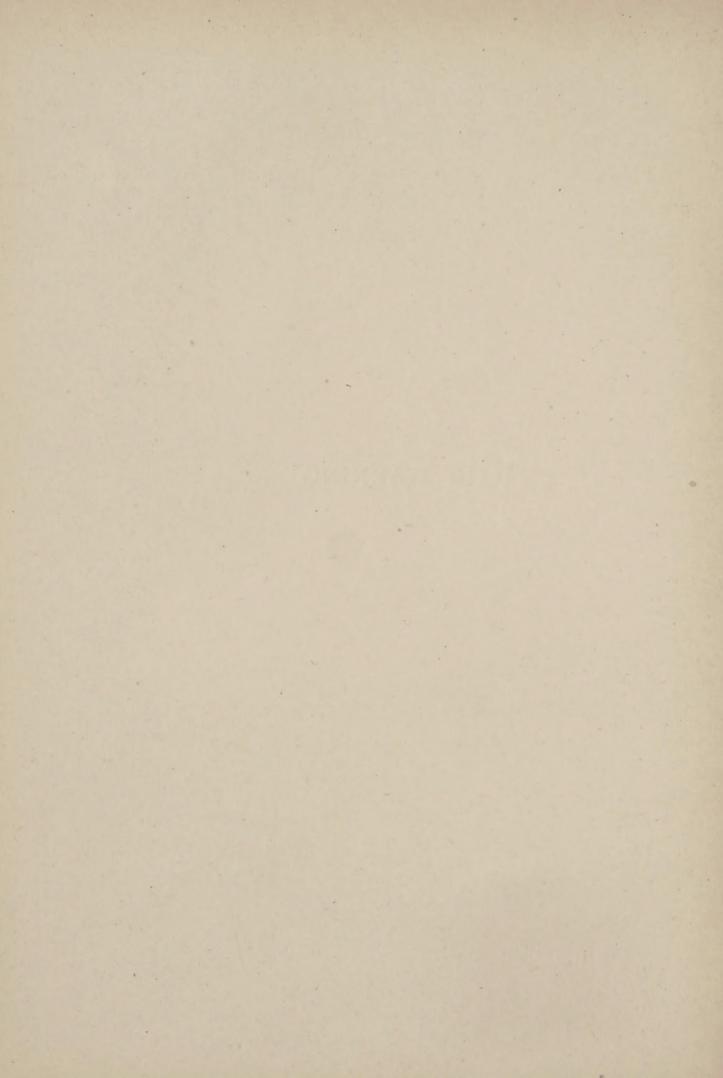
V

At this the audience could not restrain its laughter, and Mrs. Lushington indignantly withdrew. The next morning Mr. Broughton had a telegram from her saying that she had been called home by the illness of her mother. On Sunday this was followed by another saying her mother was so ill that she must resign altogether, and she never again set foot in the village.

"It was severe," remarked Mr. Broughton, "but it brought safety to the school."



FAIR WARNING



FAIR WARNING

T

Carltonville, N. Y., Sept. 26, 1913 Samuel Appleton

Ipswich, N. Y.

Dear sir,

I am sorry to say my first experience with your agency proves a frost. Miss Lauriston is wholly impossible. For instance, this afternoon she was required like all the teachers at the close of school to make out her report for the week. I waited fifteen minutes and it had not come. I dispatched one of the teachers for it and Miss Lauriston sent back word she would hand it in Monday. I went to her room and found her chatting with

one of her pupils. "I will wait here while you make your report," I said. She dismissed the girl, unwillingly, and filled out her blanks. It took ten minutes of my time to see that a simple regulation was complied with. I was tempted to dismiss her on the spot, but decided to keep her till the Christmas vacation. If she has not resigned by that time she will be publicly dropped. You need not bother to recommend anybody for her place. I should not under any circumstances take a second teacher from your agency.

Yours truly,

Oscar Zumpt

II

Carltonville, N. Y. Sept. 27, 1915 Dear Mr. Appleton,

I do not feel that I can stay here. If it were not so necessary on account of my mother to have my salary every week I would resign at once. As it is I must stay till you find me another place, but I hope that will be soon. They will be glad to release me here at any time.

I thought at Appleboro that thereafter I could endure almost any kind of a principal if he had backbone enough to run the school, but I see there are other requirements. This school runs like clockwork; everything is done on the tick. But someway it is not team work: it is domineering work. "L'etat, c'est moi," Louis XIV said. In Mr. Zumpt's eyes he is the school. There is never a discussion of what we want; it is always, "I want this", and it has to be. Instead of cooperation there must be obedience, unreasoning, unhesitating.

For instance, the only pupil in my grade

who has given me any trouble is Jessica Cole. She is older than the rest in the class because promotions are so rigid here; I think she has been kept back because she did not pass in drawing. So in arithmetic and English and geography she is going over again what is already familiar and does not interest her. That gives her abundant spare time, and she employs it in meditating over her grudges, of which she has a large and varied assortment against her former teacher for keeping her back, against her former class for glorying over outstripping her, against her present class for patronizing her as a leftover, and against the school generally for being prejudiced against her and giving her no fair show. Of course all this centres on me.

To tell the truth I think there is a good deal of justice in her complaints; she ought

to be in the grade ahead. And there are possibilities in her. She seems sullen, but that can be accounted for, and I am sure she will respond if I can get the right hold of her. I have avoided an issue because I have been studying her, and wanted to be sure of my ground when collision came.

But yesterday afternoon just before closing the crisis arrived. She was not only disobedient but defiant, and had to be dealt with on the spot. I kept her after school, and I talked with her frankly. She was surprised to see how much I had discovered about her, how fairly I judged her, how sincerely I was her friend. I told her it was not a question of her obeying me as an individual; I should not ask that; I did not want it. What was required of us both was to carry out our

parts in a big organization, where harmony and team work were indispensible. She began to believe and trust me; in five minutes my arm would have been around her, her head on my shoulder, her troubles poured out to me, and thereafter we should have been comrades.

But just then down must come one of the other teachers with a peremptory demand for a silly weekly report that must me made out on Friday afternoons. I replied impatiently that I would hand it in Monday morning. I was willing to stay till after dark to make it out, but I couldn't have Jessica Cole's future imperilled for a bit of routine like that.

I resumed my talk with Jessica, and was getting back into her confidence when down came Mr. Zumpt swaggering into the room to say that he would remain with me till that report was made out. His manner was more offensive than his words, and I could see Jessica's sarcastic smile. This was the team work, the cooperation I had been impressing upon her. I dismissed her and shall try to pick up the threads again Monday, but the work is spoiled; I shall never have the hold upon her I could have got in another five minutes.

Forgive me for writing so much in detail, but I want you to see why I cannot do good work here. In school a despotism is not the best government, even where the despot is capable.

Yours sincerely,

Edith Lauriston

III

Ipswich, N. Y., Sept. 30, 1913

My dear Miss Lauriston,

Most of the vacancies during the year

come at Christmas, so you had better not think of resigning before then. If it seems desirable at that time I shall have no difficulty in placing you, but don't cross a bridge till you get to it. Lots of things may happen before Christmas. Do your work as well as though you expected to stay twenty years.

If you will pardon my saying so, the illustration you give reflects more upon you than on Mr. Zumpt. It is not for you to pronounce his weekly reports silly, and when he sent for it you should have made it out on the instant. Jessica Cole would have willingly waited the ten minutes, and you would have shown her that you too were carrying out your part in a big organization where harmony and team work are indispensable. You felt and acted as though you thought it was obey-

ing Mr. Zumpt as an individual, and you put yourself wrong in Jessica's eyes, as, I am sure, you are now in your own.

This was a slip, but we all slip sometimes. On the whole you are a capable and desirable teacher, and I want Carltonville to consider you so when you go away, whether it is at Christmas, or a dozen years from now.

Sincerely your friend, Samuel Appleton

IV

Carltonville, N. Y., Oct. 18, 1913 My dear Brenda,

After what I wrote you last time about Mr. Zumpt you will be surprised to learn that I have just protected him from a serious danger without his knowing anything about it. It is a long story, but rather interesting, I think.

The assistant teachers here are a lot of good women, not remarkably forceful; working for a living, not for a career; more interested in their pay than in their work, who would consider an advance of fifty dollars in salary the most gratifying evidence of success; glad to obey the principal blindly and put all the responsibility on him; but kindly, conscientious, trying to earn their money.

There is one exception. Sophia Wrigglesbe is the type of all I despise in woman. Where the others are obedient she is subservient, sneaky, 'umble like Uriah Heep. Why a man of Mr. Zumpt's intelligence shouldn't see through her I don't know, but he seems to like being kowtowed to and he gives her many special privileges. Naturally the more she gets the more she asks for, and I happened to be in his office

when she asked too much. It was before Columbus day, which came on Monday, and she begged Mr. Zumpt to let her go home Friday noon and not return till Tuesday morning. So far from consenting, he berated her for always wanting to escape her regular work. In fact, he said, that decided him not to have a holiday on Monday; the board had left it to him and there would be the regular work in the morning and some special exercises in the afternoon.

She did not reply but I saw her eyes as she turned away. They were like a cat's when a dog is chasing her, phosphorescent and threatening: it was plain that if she found a way she would revenge herself on him.

The next Friday afternoon I went into the library to look up some points in English history and was at work in the farthest corner, behind the stacks. Miss Wrigglesbe came in and stood on the other side of the stack, not seeing me and evidently waiting for somebody. Soon in came Alasco Huggins, a big, overgrown boy whom Mr. Zumpt brought up before the school for lying last week, and gave him the severest verbal castigation I ever heard. So I could see there was some plot under way.

As soon as he came in she asked in a whisper, "Is it all fixed?" and he replied, "Yes, the eleven big boys have promised, and if the little ones don't come in we will skin 'em alive." Then she asked, "Are you going to stay away?" "No," he said, "we are going to go in and then march out." She asked, "Aren't you afraid he will stop you?" And he replied, "No, he

might stop one of us but he can't stop eleven," and they both laughed and went away.

I knew there had been some feeling about not having Columbus day for a holiday, for the football nine was to have played Ipswich, and I could see how Miss Wrigglesbe had fanned the dissatisfaction into a mutiny; the boys were going to strike on Monday. What should I do? I didn't want to go to Mr. Zumpt with the acknowledged dissension there is between us. He wouldn't want me to come to him or listen to me if I came. He wouldn't be afraid of a strike; he would think he could quell it in an instant. He doesn't know what a feeling there happens to be just now in the community over the strike at the chair mill, where the men are still out and likely to win, and the village is

in sympathy with them. The pupils have talked it over a good deal, and repeated among themselves what they have heard at home. It is a bad time for the thought of a strike in school to come up. But Mr. Zumpt wouldn't realize this; he thinks nothing can block his will.

I wondered what I could do of myself to prevent the strike.

The eleven big boys must of course include Alison Pierpont. He is the most influential boy member of the senior class. I have him in civics, and have found him decidedly interesting. He has his own views on almost every topic, and defends them well. He is usually in the wrong and when he is convinced he is converted, but it often tasks me to answer his arguments and we have become excellent friends. It occurred to me that if I could

see Alison alone I could win him over.

He is on the ball team that on Saturday was to play Ashby on their grounds. He would come back on the 6:32, and as he lives to the south of the village would be likely to walk home at once and alone. I managed to meet him, and when he, polite boy that he is, turned to walk with me I insisted myself on turning and accompanying him, telling him I was out for a walk.

"Alison," I began, "what is this I hear about a strike Monday?"

"I don't know what you have heard," he said, "but there is going to be one."

"That would be a pity," I said; "it disgraces a school so."

"It disgraces old Fuss and Feathers," he replied, referring thus disrespectfully

to Mr. Zumpt, "and he deserves it for not giving us Columbus day."

"It disgraces me just as much as preceptress," I said; "more, for I teach the civics, and I am a failure if I have not impressed it upon my pupils that the first duty of pupils is to be obedient to constituted authority, as it will be when they are citizens."

"But we may get rid of old Fuss and Feathers, and have a more reasonable constituted authority."

"Please don't speak of him that way," I said. "You won't begin to get rid of him. He is strong with the board and with the community, and he deserves to be for he keeps a good school. All you will accomplish will be to have the strike chronicled all over the state as a disgrace to Carlton-ville."

"He will have to give in."

"Not on your life. If the boys march out of school he has only to send the attendance officer after those under sixteen, and that takes all but two of you."

"But at least we make a protest."

"Against what?"

"Keeping us in when the law says we are to have a holiday."

"The law does not say so. It is interpreted by the Education department to require just what the board of education prescribed, school open as usual but special exercises."

"We had it for a holiday last year."

"There were special reasons then. As kept here this month it followed the common rule throughout the state."

"Are you certain of that?"

"We have argued enough over civics,

Alison, for you to be sure I never state a fact without making sure of it."

"I wish I had talked with you about this before, Miss Lauriston, but I have promised the other boys to join them in the strike."

"Alison, you know that point in parliamentary law that only one who has voted for a resolution can move its reconsideration. You are the one to persuade the other boys to reconsider. Who was the first to propose it, Alasco Huggins?"

"I think he was the originator of the idea."

"Is Alasco Huggins the boy you want to follow?"

"I don't think much of him."

"And yet you let yourself be a catspaw to revenge him for a deserved punishment for accustomed lying. You show more acumen than that in the civics class."

"I believe you are right, Miss Lauriston. I think I can get the boys to change their minds, and I will do it."

There we parted, and I feel that the strike is averted. But is it not curious I should have done this for Mr. Zumpt?

What a long letter, but I feel rather proud of what I have accomplished, and wanted to record the conversation before I forget it.

Your friend,
Edith Lauriston

V

Carltonville, N. Y., Oct. 18, 1913 Dear Lydia,

I am the maddest woman in New York.

I had a scheme all worked out for getting square on old Zumpt for the way he talked

to me the other day. The eleven biggest boys were pledged to walk out of school Monday morning, and old Fuss and Feathers would have got an advertisement that wouldn't raise his salary. But when they met Sunday evening to perfect their plans, one of them, a stuck-up senior named Alison Pierpont, backed out and persuaded the others to. Alasco Huggins told him he must have given in to Miss Lauriston, the new preceptress whom Mr. Zumpt is going to turn out at Christmas, and said Alison was tied to Miss Lauriston's apron strings. At that Alison struck him and gave him two black eyes, and hit him under the chin so hard that he dropped and didn't come to right off. I wish he had killed him and was going to be hanged for it. Alasco couldn't come to school Monday, and the strike was all off. I believe it is

true about Miss Lauriston, and I'll bet you I get even with her before she leaves the school.

Yours sincerely,
Sophia Wrigglesbe

VI

Carltonville, Dec. 10, 1913 My dear Eugene,

Yes, we came through with a clean score. In the postponed game with Ips-wich I had the good luck to make the winning touch-down. I started from our thirty-yard line and three men got their hands on me but I managed to wiggle through. What an exultant feeling it is when you actually get clear of the other team and have a straight run to the cross-bar.

By the way, I told you how we planned a strike after old Fuss and Feathers took away Columbus day, and how Miss Lauriston persuaded us to refrain for the honor of the school. There is another tail to that kite.

As you know, my mother is a niece by marriage of Judge Fellows, and he has always taken a fancy to me. People think he is awfully cross and severe, but to me he has always been almost chummy, talking with me on a level, and giving me a lot of good points. Last Saturday he stopped over here and after lunch he took me to walk.

"Alison," he asked, "what do you consider the prime requisite to success in life?"

"Integrity, I suppose," I replied.

"In your case we may assume that," he said, looking at me in the way it makes me feel I must live up to what he expects

of me, "and energy, and education. But beyond these?"

"I hardly know what to name."

"I can tell you: good judgment, so that when you pronounce an opinion it will carry weight. Most men go off at half-cock; they fire before they are loaded; they give hasty impressions for convictions. It is the man who thinks before he speaks and makes sure before he asserts and is found afterwards to have been right that will be looked up to and followed."

"You seem to be describing yourself, Uncle Frank."

"Since I have been on the bench it has been my profession to be that kind of a man, but I am still too liable to prejudice and hasty conclusions. I want you to escape my errors."

"Have you some blunder of mine in view, Uncle Frank?"

"Yes, I have, Alison. When your aunt told you the other day that our preceptress at Winchendon was at the head of the eligible list in New York City and likely to be called there at any time, you told her we couldn't find anywhere a woman equal to your Miss Lauriston here."

"I stand by that as if it were the only judgment I ever uttered."

"I was impressed by the way you put it and I wrote to your principal here to see if he confirmed you. Now see what he says."

He handed me a letter which read as follows:

Carltonville, Dec. 3, 1913

Dear sir, answering your letter as to Miss Lauriston I would say that we should be glad to have you give her a contract, as we are to dismiss her at Christmas and if she had another place it might save legal complications, but truth compels me to say that while her classroom work is fair to medium she is wholly without executive ability, has no recognition of system, and is by no means loyal. Therefore I could not recommend her for preceptress of a school.

"Yours truly,

"Alphonzo Zumpt"

"Isn't that just like old Fuss and Feathers?" I exclaimed indignantly.

"It is the man's judgment as compared with an enthusiastic boy's," replied the Judge.

"Uncle Frank, let me tell you something," I said; and I explained how Miss Lauriston had prevented the strike. "And Mr. Zumpt doesn't know this?"
Uncle Frank asked.

"He hasn't an idea that the strike was ever contemplated."

"And nobody knows why you changed your mind?"

"Miss Lauriston made me promise never to mention her part in it."

"Alison, I am proud of you from every viewpoint," he said. "Suppose we call on Miss Lauriston. The vacancy now exists and I believe she is the woman we want."

So we found Miss Lauriston and Uncle Frank was so pleased with her that he engaged her on the spot at a thousand dollars a year. Wasn't it lucky it turned out that way?

Your fast friend,
Alison Pierpont

VII

"Carltonville, Dec. 15, 1917

"Dear sir,

We have got rid of Miss Lauriston, thank heaven, but I have decided to promote Miss Wrigglesbe to her place; she is not all that could be desired, but at least she is obedient and loyal. Miss Lauriston goes to Winchendon. They can't blame me there: I gave Judge Fellows fair warning.

Yours truly,

Alphonzo Zumpt

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When Reuel Wharton's wife died the light went out of his life. They had been comrades from childhood, were graduated from high school in the same class, went to Yale and to Smith the same year, and married as soon as their courses were finished. They taught together, played together, thought together, grew together, till each was as sure of the other as of an arm. When in his absence from their summer camp she ventured out alone in their canoe and was drowned, his impulse was to follow her into the water and lie at the bottom of the lake clasping her in his arms. "He will never look at another woman," said his younger friends. "He will marry within a year," said older ones:
"it is the highest tribute he can pay her."

II

The summer vacation had just begun, and for distraction he went to Europe. He was in Luzerne on that August Sunday when news came that war was declared and it was manifest that Americans could not get home too soon. He was alone, with only a handbag, able to help some one who needed a protecting arm, and he looked about to see where his services were most needed. He found an American girl named Leslie almost distracted. father, consul in a small German city, had recently died, leaving her, already motherless from childhood, barely funds enough to reach America, where she hoped to find a living as a teacher. She had bought passage to New York by a Hamburg

steamer, and had taken a rund-reise ticket through Munich and Italy to see the great picture galleries. Had there been nothing unexpected she would barely have had money enough left to finish her voyage. As it was her tickets to Hamburg and to New York were useless, the little money she had was Italian and refused, and it was doubtful if she could pay for her bed and breakfast.

Mr. Wharton provided everything, got her baggage through, found a seat for her in compartments already more than full, and a berth in a steamer from Havre that had ceased booking passengers a week before.

But he was only officially her companion. His heart was closed to women, and while he was kind and thoughtful he was not social or inquisitive. He was helping a human being, not her.

III

When the pilot came on board the mail contained a letter for him saying that the woman engaged to fill his wife's place was on the eligible list in New York City and had received her appointment. They could not refuse to release her and asked him to stop over in New York long enough to engage some one for the vacancy. Mr. Wharton wondered if Miss Leslie could fill the place. He had picked up from what she had said that her father had kept her in a German boarding school of high class, where for eight years she had spoken only German, which was if anything readier to her than English. Her accent was Hannoverian, her manners were those of well bred German women, her habits of thought and speech were German, she would unquestionably make a superior

German teacher. The classes were now in the hands of Miss Henley, a woman who had spent six months in Berlin, but to whom German was something put on like an outside garment; who never uttered a German sentence without first visualizing it in print as a translation. Miss Henley would much prefer the Latin and history which his wife had taught, and would teach them much better than German. By transferring these classes to her he could give the German to Miss Leslie, and with it some work in fine arts and in modern history, in which his brief conversations with her led him to believe her well grounded.

He utilized the long delay on the pier while their baggage was being examined to question her, decided that she would do, and offered her the place at seven hundred dollars a year, to her a miraculous salary. He had found her in the depths of despair, absolutely helpless and hopeless; he had taken entire care of her, protected her, saved her, and given her a place she had never dreamed of. She could afford to be grateful, and she was.

IV

If anyone had been inclined to suspect sentimentality in thus rescuing a pretty woman found abroad, one had only to see them together to be undeceived. Mr. Wharton's relation to her was wholly impersonal. He explained her work, gave her some idea of the running of the school and her relation to it, and left her to herself, the more entirely because she seemed to adjust herself readily. She proved a successful teacher, getting hold of her pupils from the first. Miss Henley had

nominally used the conversational method, but the sentences were those of Ollendorf. Miss Leslie soon got her pupils to expressing their thoughts directly in German without translation, and with those of the upper classes she spoke German entirely in school and out, about everything else as well as the class work. She aimed more at facility than at felicity, but the latter came too, and visitors who knew the language were surprised at the proficiency shown. Her classes became the most popular in school, the talk of the county.

V

Mrs. Wharton had been her husband's school secretary, at first incidentally, then formally, with two periods a day devoted to that work. When Mr. Wharton came back he told the board he preferred to do his own clerical work, hoping to fill in the

time with drudgery in itself distasteful to him but that occupied his thoughts and kept them from dwelling too constantly on his bereavement.

Little by little, almost imperceptibly, Miss Leslie insinuated herself into this work. She had been well trained in her German school, and her own reports were models of neatness and clearness. Mr. Wharton allowed her to reduce the reports of the other teachers to her own forms, to summarize them, and eventually to do other book-keeping, till before he realized it she was performing many of the duties for which his wife had been given special time. When he became conscious of this, and that she liked to do it, he arranged to substitute office work for two of her study-hall periods.

VI

The first time she came to his office for this purpose he closed the door, as had been his custom with his wife.

"Would you mind if we left the door open, Mr. Wharton?" she asked.

He reddened like a schoolboy, and was vexed beyond expression to be given a lesson in manners by a girl he should have protected. But she could see that it called his attention for the first time to the fact that she was not an article of furniture or a machine but a young woman, a charming one at that, whom one might want to caress if he grew fond of her. It was a wholly new point of view, and she frequently became aware that he was observing her with awakened eyes. She was worth looking at. She had perfect health, a roseate complexion, piquant

features, an illuminating smile, a quiet but happy way of expressing herself. She was one of the rare women who can wear white and keep it white, and she showed little niceties of attire that made her always look a little different from yesterday.

Presently he began to converse with her on subjects not connected with the school, and he found response to his best thoughts. His wife had liked to hear him read Shakspere and Browning as she liked to have him do anything, but he could not imagine her sitting down to read either alone. Miss Leslië knew the inner meaning of Browning's Statue and the bust, and could give the apposite quotation from a dozen plays of Shakspere. In music and in art her proficiency was far beyond his, while their tastes were similar. She had profited by that last month in

Italy and he delighted to talk over the great pictures with her. The school victrola played for them the masterpieces of opera and symphony and the same passages appealed especially to both. In short the inconceivable came to pass: he was in love with a second woman.

VII

Needless to say she knew it, and when he spoke of it she was ready to answer. There were reasons enough why she should marry him. She owed him everything, she liked him, he was a desirable husband, he would devote his life to her and give her the sort of career that appealed to her. So when he asked her to become his wife she leaned her head upon his shoulder and was passive in his embrace. "The Frenchman was right," she said to herself; "love is where one loves and the other lets herself be loved."

They were married at the end of the second June, took the tour of the Great lakes to Chicago, and spent August in New York, where Mr. Wharton studied administrative work in Columbia, while his wife made herself acquainted with the pictures in the Metropolitan art gallery.

VIII

She was seated one day before the Joan of Arc, wondering if that really was the warlike maiden, when she was kissed violently on both cheeks. Springing to her feet in anger she saw before her with outstretched arms Katrinka von Armstein. her roommate at the boarding school, In an instant the years rolled away and she was once more among her warm-hearted German schoolfellows.

"Where did you drop from?" she cried, her eyes brimming with tears of joy. "I am just arrived with my husband," replied Katrinka. "Come to lunch with me and meet him."

"I am married too," said Faith, "but my husband is off on an expedition today. You must dine with us tomorrow."

Katrinka took her to a family hotel where meals were served in their rooms from a restaurant. She introduced her husband, a dapper little officer, and the talk was all of Germany and her old friends there. Even the dishes were those of the boarding school and at the end of two hours Faith had almost forgotten that she had crossed the ocean.

"I am happier than I have been since I came away," she said, and she looked it. "Now you must dine with us to-morrow and meet my husband."

IX

Captain von Baruch looked embarrassed. "The fact is," he explained, "I am afraid I can not have the pleasure of knowing your husband. I am here on a secret mission. My presence would not be revealed to you except that you and Katrinka are such old and fast friends, and I must rely on you not to mention me to any one, even to your husband."

"No," echoed Katrinka, "it is a joy to see you and we must meet every day, but your husband must not know it. We will make appointments each day for the next, and you can manage so that he will not discover them."

Faith looked troubled. "I am not sure I ought to have secrets from my husband," she said.

The Captain and his wife laughed mer-

rily. "He is only an American pig," declared the captain; "what do you care for him?"

Faith's eyes flashed. "He is an American," she said, "but he is as much a nobleman as if he wore a title."

"Very likely, for an American," replied Katrinka soothingly, "but how unfortunate that you had to marry here. If your father had left even a hundred thousand marks of life insurance you could have had your pick of a dozen German lieutenants, and remained one of us."

"But you know I am an American myself," protested Faith.

"Only by birth. You remember the Irishman's question, 'If a cat has kittens in an oven does that make them loaves of bread?' You were born in America, but you were made in Germany.

X

"How do you get on with your husband about the war?" the captain continued.

"At first we used to argue, and he listened seriously to all I could say of Germany's need for markets and England's greed, but when the Lusitania was sunk he turned so bitterly against Germany that if I had spoken for her it would have changed his opinion not of Germany but of me."

"So you had to agree with him or lose the chance of a husband?" suggested Katrinka.

"It amounted to that."

The captain and his wife looked at each other, and the captain took from his pocket a medal and handed it to Faith. "That is what we think of the Lusitania," he said. It was a commemoration of the sinking.

"How can you rejoice over the murder of women and children?" asked Faith indignantly.

"It was an American general who said war is hell, and when there is war the one thing is to win. England rules the seas. We can defeat her only by submarines, and they are a necessity of war.

XI

"Of course you are with us in this war?"

"As against the English, yes," she replied.

"As against the English? As against the world: we are the world nation," declared the captain proudly. "You must be with us against everybody, even against America, if she comes in against us."

"You could not expect me to go on opposite side to my husband?"

"Bah! Listen, Faith. America is com-

ing into the war. If she does not come of herself we shall drive her in. We have got to have her in. We shall win in Europe but there is nobody to collect from. England, France, Italy all will be bankrupt. The money is here and we are coming here for it. And we shall win out; you know that. It is evident from what you say that your husband is a leader, among teachers and in the community. If he is bitter against us he will be a conspicuous enemy, to be punished conspicuously. Now when we have conquered America where will your husband be? His only safety will be through you as our friend. Help us, and we will see to it when the reckoning comes that he escapes through the services you have rendered us."

XII -

"What services can I render?"

"You are going to continue teaching?"

"For the present, yes."

"You can render us inestimable service. This is going to be a long war. The boys in your upper classes will be men before peace comes, and it will be partly with them that we shall treat. Every pupil that you imbue with Germany's point of view will be an ally for us, when allies count."

"But if I should talk for Germany I should be dismissed."

"You don't have to talk for Germany; we don't want you to. Talk against Germany in words, but insinuate. Especially be pessimistic. Hope the allies will win, but be fearful about it, dwell on German successes, point out what an ad-

vantage it is to have a single undisputed head like the Kaiser instead of divided councils like the allies, admit that it sometimes seems as if God were with the Central powers."

"I might do that."

"You can do it in a thousand ways without an intimation that your sympathies are with us. Then you say you converse with some of your students in German?"

"Yes, with most of the older ones."

"You can be more open with them. They are proud of their proficiency in the language, and you can inspire German ideals and habits of thought without betraying yourself; they will be vain of thinking like Germans as well as talking like them."

"I can see possibilities there."

"Then you teach the modern history?"
"Yes."

"That is a great opportunity. Deplore, as you are bound to, the enormous progress of Prussia but exaggerate it and make it seem inevitable. You can make your pupils afraid to set themselves against her."

"I think I can influence them that way."

XIII

"But you can do more than this: you can become a direct agent of the Kaiser."

"How is that possible?"

"Now I must open myself to you, Faith. My mission in America is to establish correspondents in every part of the country. We want to know what is going on behind the curtain in various communities. As it becomes more and more certain that this country will enter the war

there will be committees, associations, leagues formed for protection of American interests. Your husband as a prominent man will be a member of these organizations and will tell you all about them. We want you to keep us informed. We want a letter every week, and as agent of the Kaiser you will be paid a regular salary, a thousand marks a year."

"Why, captain, I could not take money for betraying my husband."

"You are earning it to protect your husband. By being on our payroll your agency is recognized and your influence will save your husband when without it he might be shot. We have such secret agents all over the land, professors in colleges among them. It is a service to the fatherland that ranks among the highest and will be the highest rewarded when the final settlement comes."

"You astonish me beyond words. I shall have to think it over."

XIV

In September of the year following Mr. Wharton was enjoying a Saturday morning at home. He had lots of work he wanted to clear up, notes to assort and pigeonhole, letters to answer, two or three new books to look over, and he was annoyed to be interrupted by a call. The stranger introduced himself as a government detective, and inquired how the village was rising to the preparedness problem.

"I am disappointed," replied Mr. Wharton. "We seem to have made every effort but we are not getting the results we had looked for. There are fewer enlistments, fewer subscriptions to the Red Cross and the Liberty bonds than in neighboring

villages. My school ought to have more stars on its service flag than any other in the county, but it is way behind. Some way what I say does not meet with response."

"Do any of your teachers feel lukewarm?"

"I don't think so. They are always ready to second any effort I make."

XV

"Your wife was brought up in Germany, wasn't she?"

Mr. Wharton flushed and spoke with some heat. "Yes, but she is my wife end I may be presumed to know her attitude."

"Yet it is about your wife I called to see you. Here is a letter that your wife mailed at half-past ten last night."

"And may I ask how you came to open it?"

"If you will read it the question will be unnecessary."

"But it is addressed to Miss Iona Bostwick. My wife has no acquaintance of that name."

"There is no such woman. Your wife has sent forty letters within a year to forty different addresses, all of them fictitious. Every one of the letters was received by a former schoolmate of hers, the wife of Captain von Baruch, arrested yesterday with him and now in custody for conspiracy. It was through letters found in their possession that we learned of your wife's correspondence and intercepted this letter."

"I will call my wife," said Mr. Wharton.

The detective had been moving about
the room and at this he suddenly pulled
a door that opened inwardly and Mrs.

Wharton fell to the floor: she had been listening at the keyhole. "It won't be necessary to call her," remarked the detective grimly. "Now suppose you read the letter."

XVI

Translated it read as follows:

"My dear Iona, we are having busy times these days. Conscription arouses lots of opposition. As chairman of the examining board my husband has made enemies by the score. Most men are cowards and they resort to all sorts of subterfuges to be rejected. He has detected a good many of their tricks but he says he has undoubtedly been deceived in many others. He is depressed at the physical unfitness of the men: even if they get to camp a great many of them will be invalided, and will simply cost the country thousands of dollars for nothing.

"Three or four of the largest boys in school are Irish, and somehow or other they are impressed that this is a good time to escape the domination of England. They talk of it at home and there has arisen quite a feeling against being forced to fight for their oppressor. A secret meeting has been called for next week and I should not be surprised if there were results.

"General Rodiger spent last night with us. He wanted to consult my husband about the disposition of the Red Cross war chest here, of which my husband is the chief director. He said his regiment was to sail for Bordeaux next Saturday by the Rochambeau, a dead secret as the steamer hopes to escape the submarines, but he confided it to my husband and asked that part of our contribution be entrusted

to him. When he and my husband went to a rally at the town hall I looked over his papers, but found nothing of interest.

Yours ever,

Franza Kempelin

XVII

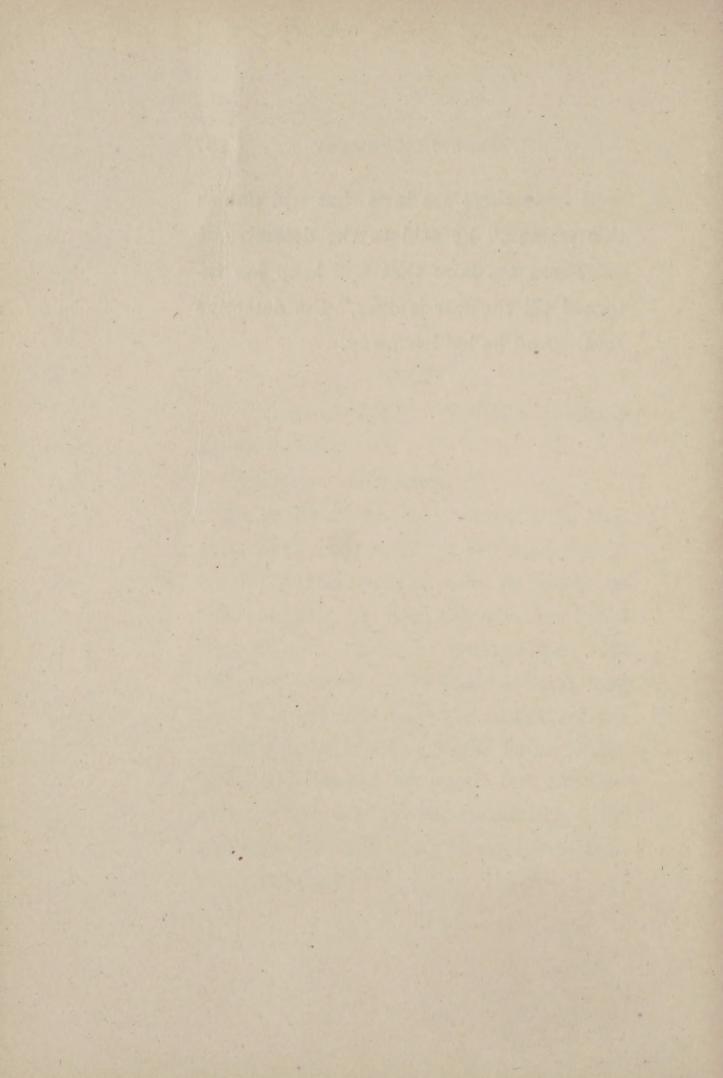
"You wrote this?" asked Mr. Wharton of his shivering wife.

"Yes," she whispered.

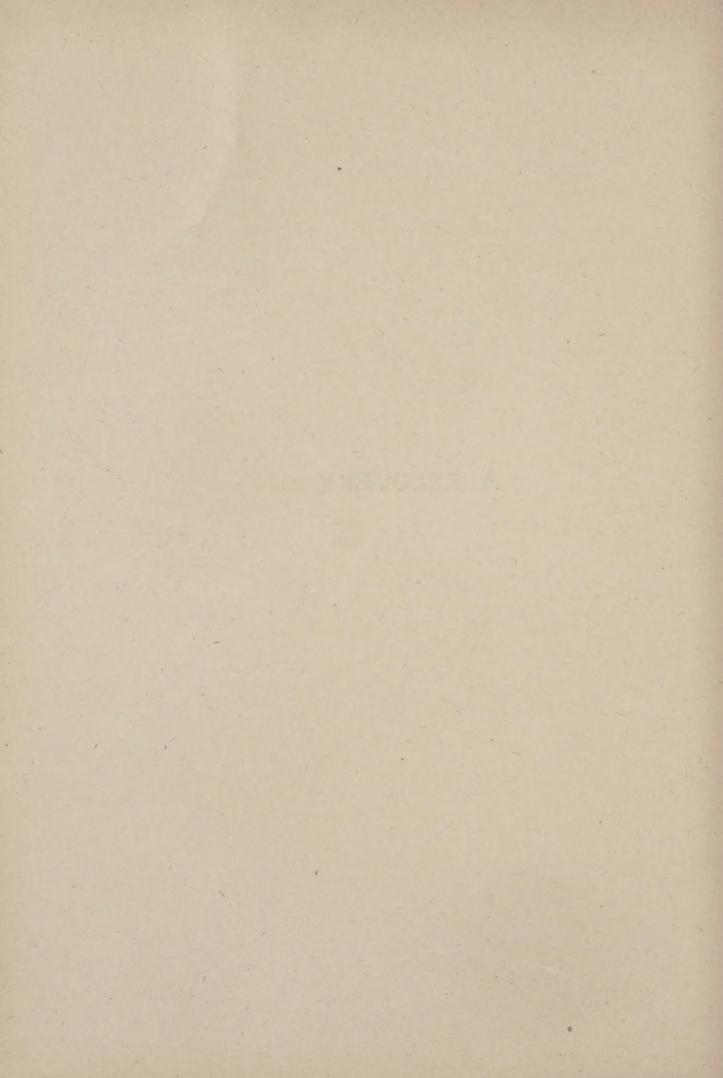
As he looked back he remembered that just then the predominant thought in his mind was wonder that so lately as this morning he had thought he loved that woman. Now he loathed her. He abhorred deceit. Her life was one long lie. For the first time the import of her maiden name revealed itself, Faith Leslie. She had changed her name but not her nature, she had lived faithlessly. She had been not only treacherous but a traitor, a paid spy.

"I hope there are laws that will punish this woman," he said to the detective.

"There are laws that will keep her interned till the war is over," the detective said. And he led her away.



A RECOVERY



A RECOVERY

I

"What a delightful woman your wife is" remarked Dr. Bronson, looking admiringly as she went upstairs after bidding them good night.

"She is a growing delight. She is winsome to everybody, but to me she is a neverfailing storehouse of surprises of affection and service. She spoils me, but it reacts. I am naturally selfish but she makes it a joy to do for her."

"I admire the fond irony you two use so freely. You look each other soberly in the eye and accuse each other of greed and neglect in a way to deceive even the elect. Doesn't it puzzle strangers?"

(111)

"Often, especially waiters at hotels. Once at the Navarre the man brought oat-meal enough for a family. 'Is there more than you want?' I asked. She measured it with her eye and replied reflectively, 'No, I think not'; and the waiter took away my saucer."

"I don't know a greater proof of mutual confidence than to be able to say the opposite of what you mean without the possibility of being misunderstood."

"Mildred and I never contemplate misunderstanding. I am so sure she will always consider me first that I have to plot to make what I think she wants seem to be what I want."

"I can understand that. When anybody doubts if there can be happiness in marriage where there is disparity in years, I say, 'Look at the Knights'."

"I was double her age, forty-two to twenty-one. I hesitated over it a long while. Finally I put the case before her. She leaned her head on my shoulder, and the subject has never been mentioned since."

"What a blessing it is to be happily married."

"So great that I can hardly conceive of real happiness without it. She is always on hand to enjoy with me, to understand, appreciate, sympathize. Her sense of humor is fully as keen, and she remembers jokes, so that the least hint recalls them. She is always either humming or smiling, so that when I come home tired all my troubles disappear and I relax in comfort."

"You are indeed blessed, Mr. Knight, more blessed than you realize."

The good doctor sighed as he said good-

night. Mrs. Bronson's reputation as a wife was somewhat different.

II

As Cuthbert Knight sat reflecting over their conversation the realization came to him that he had lied. All that he had described had been true, and it was not till he depicted it to another that he yielded to the conviction it was true no longer. Mildred was still docile, unselfish, watchful, quick to anticipate his desires; but her affection had become only receptive. She yielded to his caresses, she returned them as far as required, but she no longer initiated. There was no more stealing up behind him and throwing her arms about his neck, her cheek next to his. The playful little jokes were gone; now and then she even took his irony for earnest, a painful sign of diverging thought. He had not before seen it clearly, but it was a fact that he was losing her.

III

How had it happened? Was it his fault? Certainly his love was not less. Never had she been dearer than at this minute. She was so woven into all the threads of his enjoyment of life that she was indispensable. He could not picture what would happen to him without her. He went back over the recent weeks and months in search of any apparent carelessness or neglect. He could not find an instance; it had been more than ever his joy to invent little surprises for her, to gratify her slightest desires. No, his love had every day increased, and there had been no cross current to interrupt its manifestation. The rift within the lute had not come from him.

IV

Had some other man entered her life? He ran over in his mind every man she was accustomed to meet, laughing as the absurdity in each case appeared so manifest. Then he ran his mind back over them again, pausing this time at one name which at first had seemed preposterous. Fernando Tate was a mere boy, still in the effervescent stage, too young to be considered. Then it occurred to him that Fernando was a year older than Mildred, and that her point of view might be different.

V

Most men have their vanities. Cuthbert Knight's was his love for music. He had not been musically educated; all his knowledge was picked up. But he had always reached for the highest, it had

seemed to him that appreciation of music belonged to a rich cultivation, and he had seized every opportunity to hear it. He had always lived in the country, far from a music centre, but when he went to New York, or afterwards to London and Paris and Berlin and Vienna, he had always put music first, and he had heard most of the commoner operas and oratorios. In the first dozen bars he could place and name the Miserere, the Pilgrim's chorus, the Torreador's song, Know'st thou the land, Infelice, so that among the country people he seemed a virtuoso. Had his village heard that he had been appointed director of the Metropolitan they would have thought the opera house fortunate.

VI

It had been one of his reasons for thinking he could make Mildred happy. She had been brought up in a suburb of Boston where the concerts and the opera season were considered as much a part of education as the public school. She was not an artist, but she could play anything on the piano. Her musical education had cultivated appreciation rather than execution, she knew music thoroughly, and she missed it when she came to Buckminster to teach.

Truth to tell, she was not a good teacher. She was a Wellesley graduate but she had never been a profound student. She had apprehension and appreciation but not application. She did not know her subjects well and she did not seem to have the capacity to master them. It had been because she needed so much help that Mr. Knight had seen so much of her. She was probably too willing to be aided, too

much inclined to lean back on his right arm instead of struggling with the current for herself. But she was grateful. She believed that never before had there been so great and so good a man. When he intimated that he would be inclined to ask her to marry him were it not so great a sacrifice for her, she did not hesitate to indicate to him that she could imagine no happier future.

VII

His first care was to satisfy her musical taste. He bought a Weber piano that responded to every touch, and on the start put beside it the Schirmer set of operas in uniform binding. To this he added generously till their musical library became the talk of the county.

When the graphophone began to reproduce they sneered at "canned music"

and took no interest in its subsequent development. But one day when Mr. Knight was in Albany on business one of the assistant commissioners took him home to dinner, and after it the son played the victrola. Mr. Knight expected to endure it, but the first selection was Schumann-Heink's "My heart at thy sweet voice". He had heard her sing it, and he was amazed that the tone was so adequately reporduced. When he listened to Caruso, Homer, and Tamagno's "Death of Othello" he became a convert. He went on down the river to New York, spent three days listening to records, and came home with a two-hundred dollar instrument and music that cost as much more.

His wife's incredulity vanished, and both spent their evenings in this new luxury. They appropriated ten dollars a

month to new records, Mildred choosing them from the monthly announcements. The records Mr. Knight had bought were vocal; his musical taste had not gone far beyond the air. But Mildred selected solos with orchestral accompaniments, and interested her husband in these. Finally she smuggled in Haydn's Surprise symphony, and got him to enjoy the second movement, where the same simple air is played in key after key by instrument after instrument with variation after variation. When he finally grasped this and enjoyed it she found him willing to buy symphonies from Beethoven and Schubert; finally from Dvorak and Tschaikowski. He learned to enjoy the orchestra better than the voice. When the Edison machine came out, they bought the transferrable diamond reproducer by which they could play Edison records on the victrola, and now that each instrument could be heard so individually he learned to recognize and appreciate not only the violin and cello and flute and clarinet and trumpet and tuba and trombone, but the oboe and the bassoon and the shepherd's pipe and the French horn. In short Mr. Knight's little store of musical knowledge grew by leaps and bounds, and to tell the truth his pride in it became tiresome.

VIII

One night when some new records had come from New York, Mr. Knight invited Fernando Tate to supper and to hear the victrola. Fernando was the son of an attaché of the consulate at Leipzig, too obscure to be noticed, too useful to be displaced, who had eked out a small salary by tips from dealers who wanted their

invoices expedited. His wife had died over there, leaving Fernando an infant. The father had paid for his board and clothes and education, but given him little attention. The boy went through the Teischmann schule and the gymnasium and the university. He even took the conservatory course and got his diploma there. He would have liked to make music his profession, but he did not have the artist's touch, and his father insisted that for a man music was an excellent accomplishment but a poor business.

So when his father died suddenly, leaving little property, Fernando came to America. It seemed a choice between giving piano lessons and teaching German. He chose the latter, and Mr. Knight got hold of him, wanting the German thought as well as speech.

IX

When this evening the victrola records came to be played, Mr. Knight discovered how shallow and circumscribed was his musical knowledge. He had talked over this music with Mildred; had instructed her, as he thought. But when Fernando and she conversed about it they used a new language, terms that he did not know even the meaning of, like imperfect consonances, subordinate triads, deceptive cadencies, the cantus firmus in alto, succession of a perfect and an augmented fifth; and they recognized harmony where to him there was a blur of sound.

Cuthbert was overwhelmed, but his was not a petty nature to be jealous. He was glad Mildred had this opportunity to develop her musical taste, and he invited Fernando often. She became eager to

have Fernando come, excited while he was there, reminiscent when he had gone. He could reproduce anything upon the piano, and when an air of a harmony especially interested them he could develop it, and he often staid late. As Cuthbert looked back with his new suspicion he saw that Mildred had been interested in the man as well as in the music. He had fascinated her. That way lay danger.

X

He tossed over it all night, and he took the morning train to Ipswich.

"Mr. Appleton," he said, "I find that on account of my wife's health I shall have to go to the Rocky mountains, if possible at once. Can you get me a place out there somewhere?"

Mr. Appleton knew Mildred and her family. Her lungs were sound; there was

some other reason. He did not ask what, but took up the telephone. "Give me Helena, Main 2934."

The reply came from the state superintendent of public instruction, and Mr. Appleton went on: "I am wondering if you happen to have an immediate vacancy for a ten-thousand dollar superintendent who can be had for two thousand dollars."

"As it happens I have just been notified that Bancroft of Heliopolis died yesterday. Tell me about your man." And before noon Mr. Knight was engaged, to go at once.

XI

Returning home, Cuthbert saw the members of the board and got his release: in point of fact he was chagrined that they were so willing to let him go; they seemed to think Mr. Tate could carry on the school

well enough. Mr. Knight was renting his house furnished, and by good luck the owner was rather glad to move back. He arranged to have his piano and victrola and music packed, and only then went home and told his wife, "We start tomorrow for Montana. I have been appointed superintendent at Heliopolis, a great promotion."

She betrayed no agitation or regret, but seemed proud of his success. She had no relatives nearer than Boston and there were no people in the village she felt she must single out for good-bye, so they relied for leave-taking upon a notice in the newspaper, and took the Sunday evening train. Mr. Knight was confident his wife had not communicated with Fernando, and that he had removed her from temptation in time.

XII

She seemed happy in their new home. He had found pleasant furnished rooms, and she enjoyed the people as well as the climate. He blessed his penetration in having discovered her danger and led her to escape it.

One noon he heard her fall on the floor in a sudden faint. He rushed in and laid her upon the bed, but in looking for her his glance had fallen on a desk he had given her, a queer affair he had picked up in Florence, lined with steel, and with a complicated lock. He had always respected his wife's individuality, and had told her this desk was her treasure-house; she was to keep in it not only her money and her jewelry but her secrets. She had left it open, and Mr. Knight's quick glance had without purpose fallen on a little

packet of letters tied with a blue ribbon, the envelopes addressed in Fernando's handwriting to "Miss Mary Huchison", and the last dated that very month. His wife was maintaining a secret correspondence.

He closed the desk even before he ministered to his wife, that she might not know he had discovered her secret, and he was rewarded to see the relief that came into her eyes, when as she recovered consciousness she cast a quick look at the desk and found it closed.

He gave no hint of his discovery, but he sat up that night long into the small hours. His wife loved another and had deceived him. It seemed impossible but he must face it. What should he do?

XIII

Should he give her up? He considered that first. If it was for her happiness it

was not impossible. Reno was not far away and six months would do it.

But he could not believe she would be happy. Fernando Tate was a fellow of pleasant manners, plausible exterior, quick apprehension, ready to be all things to all men. But he had no conscience, no principles. He believed in nothing, not even in himself. He had no stability, no application. He had not even proved a good German teacher, neglecting his work as soon as the novelty wore off. Letters Mr. Knight had received from teachers and members of the board showed that he had not made good as principal. Though the school was well organized and would run some time on its momentum, the inefficiency of the new head was already manifest. He was not even doing his best.

His education in Germany had given him nothing of American chivalry toward women. He considered them instruments of his pleasure, without a thought of idealizing them or sacrificing for them. Mildred was just now the object of his desire, but if he married her he would soon tire of her. She would penetrate his slight veil of conventionality and discover the selfish nature underneath. No, it would be cruelty to turn her over to him.

XIV

How could he snatch him out of her life? He recalled seeing Rhea in the American four-act version of *Diane de Lys*. When the wife and her lover were eloping the husband opened the door upon them and told the lover if he was ever again even seen with the wife he would be shot like a dog. The lover slunk off, and the

wife seeing how much stronger and more manly the husband was turned back to him, and they were happy ever after.

But it happened one night in Venice, when he had gone to the opera but found he had mistaken Tuesday for Friday and was returning to his hotel, that he passed the little French theatre and went in, not observing the name of the play. He soon found it was Diane de Lys, this time as Dumas wrote it, and as he looked on he felt that the parts were not well assigned. The lover was not the man to slink away, and when the fourth act ended it was no longer conclusive. He rose to go, but saw that the audience was waiting for another act and sat down again. The lover did come back, the husband did shoot him like a dog, but it seemed cowardly, and the husband and wife were left

united by law but divided in spirit; like the last play he saw at the Comedie Francais, Les Tenailles, where before the final fall of the curtain the husband and wife were left on the stage in silence to contemplate the misery of the rest of their lives, fastened together like a pair of shears, but coming in contact only to grind one another.

XV

He could not imagine spying in any way upon his wife. It was wholly unintentionally that he discovered Fernando was corresponding with her. If she carelessly left one of the letters outside he would not dream of looking at it. If a telegram came for her he not only would not open it but he would be careful not to be present when she got it and would show no curiosity about it. But in order to protect Mil-

dred he was quite willing to spy upon Fernando. Vacation was at hand and he wrote to a detective agency to find out what Fernando planned.

Before long this telegram came: "Leaves today by Rock Island, sleeping car for Heliopolis, arrive Tuesday morning."

XVI

He was coming of course by appointment, and all sorts of possibilities opened. Cuthbert had no question that Mildred was so far innocent of physical wrongdoing, but this looked like an elopement. What must be done?

He might go to Omaha, meet the train, thresh Fernando to within an inch of his life, and ship him back east. He might even meet Fernando and threaten to do it, and such he was sure was Fernando's cowardice that he would still return east.

That would save Mildred from her lover but it would not give her back to her husband. Some way she must be brought to see that her husband was in every way, except that detestable proficiency in music, a better and stronger and worthier man than her lover. How could that be brought about? He pondered over it for hours and at last hit upon a solution so satisfactory that he resigned himself at once to peaceful slumber.

XVII

Half a day's ride by train from Heliopolis, across the British line, was a tract of forest, the trees not grown enough to be worth cutting for lumber, and the soil not fertile enough to reclaim. There were not even paths or trails through it, and the visitor must find his way by a compass. It happened that two members of the board

of education had gone through from west to east, one vacation, and they were so enthusiastic about cutting loose from civilization, starting out in the morning without guess where they should camp at night, getting most of their food by rifle and fish-line, sleeping under the stars, hearing the noises of the woods till they seemed to be communing with nature as in primeval times, that they not only wanted to go themselves again, but had inspired their wives to pray to be taken along too. In fact there had been a tentative project for a new party of four men and their wives to start early in July.

It needed only a little of Cuthbert's energy and persuasiveness to develop the project into a definite plan, with agreement to take the train at noon of the very day Fernando was to arrive.

XVIII

Mildred had felt objections she did not want to express, but as there would still be the morning of Tuesday to see Fernando she acquiesced. When Fernando presented himself. Cuthbert was naturally very much surprised, but he welcomed him cordially, and invited him to join the party as his guest. To this Fernando was glad enough to respond, while Mildred felt in a heaven of bliss.

Fernando's youth had been passed in the city of Leipzig, and the vastness of an American forest amazed him. The train had obligingly stopped at the western boundary where there was no station, and the first evening they had made their way far enough into the woods to be engulfed. After supper about an enormous fire beds were made for the women in the centre and for the five men circling about them, to protect them from possible harm. As Fernando lay on his rubber blanker and peered through the trees at the starry sky he seemed in a new existence. He wondered first at the silence of the woods. and when he became accustomed to that he wondered at the myriad noises. The birds had gone to rest, but he heard creatures moving, some of them stealthily. Once footsteps approached that he thought to be of some animal as big as a bear, and he raised himself on his elbow, hoping to see some curious brown bruin investigating. But the noise he made alarmed the animal, and he heard the steps shuffling off into the darkness. He felt at one with nature as never before, and wondered that so much of life had been shut out from him.

XIX

But in one expectation he was disappointed. He had looked forward to long tete-a-tetes with Mildred, perhaps to afternoons together in the solitude: he had assumed something of the complacent condescension of the successful lover for the complaisant husband. But opportunities did not arise. In the first place, this was a party of groups, not of individuals, and from first to last the four women were together. They slept together, were left together by the men for an hour or two after breakfast, and were never far separated. But there was more than this. The other three women had resented that Fernando should be Mildred's guest rather than her husband's. They were simple, elemental women, who had been too much absorbed in making their

homes and their husbands happy to have much knowledge of the eternal triangle or much patience with it. Cuthbert might be willing his wife should go trapesing around with another man, but they would take care he had no opportunity in this crowd.

So every effort to create a tete-a-tete was circumvented. Three determined women can make the path of the seducer difficult, and Fernando found it impossible.

XX

By the time the novelty had worn off and he found his special scheme blocked, another disappointment overtook Fernando. A travelling camping party involves considerable labor. The knapsacks of the men weighed sixty pounds each, and even for short journeys sixty pounds becomes a grievous load. Then there were the guns, the fishing tackle, the camp axe and frying pan and iron kettle. At first he reached out for his share of these and carried them blithely, but as the days wore on he escaped all that he could and went lighter-loaded than the rest. The other men were big, generous westerners, willing to do more than their part, but they could not help thinking sometimes of the two oxen, one willing to do all the work and the other willing he should.

When they paused for camp there was much to be done. Wood had to be gathered for the big fire, boughs had to be cut and stripped for the beds under the rubber blankets, water had to be brought in considerable quantity, there was much cleaning up which he detested: altogether every man had several hours work.

When he recognized it as work Fernando loathed it. In Germany he had never dreamed of sweeping his room or blacking his shoes: that was work for the maid. Once when a good deal of pains was taken to make the beds of the women comfortable his impatience found expression. "Thank God I have no wife," he exclaimed. And Mrs. Kennett, whose ancestors lived in Killarney, retorted, "Thank God for her too. If ye had one it's ashamed she'd of ye at this minute."

"Why, Nora," reproved her husband, but everybody was glad it had been said, and thereafter Fernando knew and all the rest knew that he knew that he was not a popular member of the party. Only Cuthbert never failed in courtesy to his guest. Little by little Mildred came to see Fernando through the eyes of the others and

to feel even more than their contempt for him. There was no music here. Neither she nor Fernando sang well and there was no instrument. So that glamour had disappeared, and every revelation of his narrow and selfish nature made her wonder the more what she could have seen in him to admire.

XXI

They were half way through the woods and at the highest point when one morning the oldest man in the party, who had come to Montana as a frontiersman, became anxious. "I had thought we were safe from storms," he said, "but a sou'-wester is coming that is going to be disastrous. It will drench us almost beyond drying, and make it almost impossible to keep a fire."

"When will it get here?" asked Cuthbert. "Not before four o'clock: perhaps not before night."

Cuthbert looked about. "We can put up considerable of a shack before that time," he said, naturally assuming the leadership. "Will it come from the southwest?"

"Straight."

Cuthbert selected a point higher than the rest so that water would run off, and found two trees with crotches firm enough to hold a heavy pole with slight slant to southwest. He selected a tree to be cut for that, and while the frontiersman was felling it he found two more trees whose crotches would hold a similar pole at a lower level but parallel. When the poles were in place a roof was outlined.

But the storm would be heavy, so he had a multitude of small straight limbs cut of uniform length, and had the poles notched to hold firmly these limbs.

"What good will that roof be?" asked Fernando, whose role had been dissent and incredulity, especially idleness.

Cuthbert took one of the nine rubber blankets and fastened it to the southwest lower corner of the roof by large thumbtacks he had fortunately thought to bring. Then he fastened the others to the side and above the entire roof was covered with a protection that seemed fairly waterproof. Over this pine branches were heaped and carried on down behind, while the ends were piled full of the driest wood that could be found. In front was built an enormous fire, and though the storm lasted for hours the fire cheered outside, while within the little group rejoiced in its safety.

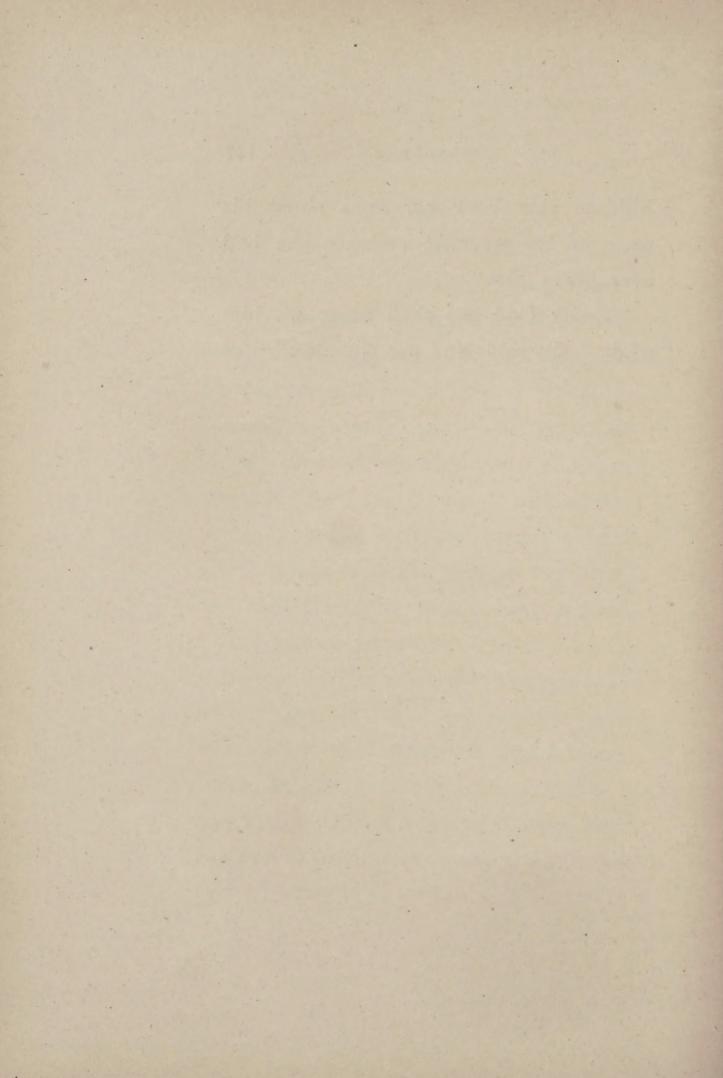
XXII

The entire party was confined in the shack all night. Fernando, already painfully conscious of the contempt there was little further pains to conceal, accepted his portion of the shelter and the food, but made no attempt to be sociable. Once he put his hand upon Mildred's arm, but she withdrew from the touch with a violence that made her repugnance manifest. Her husband was the hero of the hour, and that this shirk should have aspired to her seemed an insult.

As soon as they reached the stream that led to the railroad station on the east, so that he could follow it safely alone, Fernando said to Cuthbert, "I think I will go ahead; I am in a hurry to get back east;" and he went without a word to the rest of the party. When Cuthbert told

Mildred she threw her arms about his neck in the warmest embrace she had ever given him.

"Thank God, we shall never see him again," she said: and she shuddered.



Unconscious Tuition



UNCONSCIOUS TUITION

T

Mr. Marbeck and his wife were opening Christmas envelopes. "Here is a name I don't remember," he said, handing her a simple little card with only "Xmas" and the name "Doris Boone". There was not even an address, nor could the postmark be deciphered. All they could surmise, and that was largely guess-work, was that it came from Alabama.

"Have you ever been in that state?" asked Mrs. Marbeck.

"No, except to come through on the Illinois Central, with no stop. I must have met her some time in travelling."

"Doris. The name is unusual." (151)

"Probably I didn't call her by that."

"It must have been a long time ago."

"O yes, years and years. If it had been recently I should recall the name."

"And you must have made a deep impression on her that she remembers you so long."

"Apparently, but my recollection is not of her name. Perhaps if I saw her face I should recall it."

"How many people your bountiful nature has overflowed upon," remarked wife proudly.

"There appears no evidence of it here. All this shows is that her memory is better than mine, and I am to be reproached."

II

"Yes, Justine, it transformed my whole life."

"A single afternoon?"

"But there was so much in it. I had been visiting a classmate who had wandered from her New York home down to our southern college, and I was on my way from Ithaca to Boston by what seemed the best connection, through Geneva. It happened that there was a county fair near by, and when I got, to the train, a little late, I wandered the length of the car before I found even half a seat. I asked the man in it if the other half was occupied and he readily made way for me. When he looked up he seemed to recognize me as a southern girl and asked if it was my first trip on this road. I told him it was, and he insisted on my taking the window seat, and pointed out everything to be seen, telling me a great deal about Taghannock falls, of which we had a glimpse, interesting me in the crops, and calling attention to the beautiful views across the lake."

"Rather forward for a stranger, wasn't he?"

"It didn't seem so in the least. It was all general information, with no suggestion of being personal; just the courtesy a lady so appreciates from an unquestioned gentleman."

"Didn't he ask your name and where you were from and where you were going and whom you were going to stay with?"

"Why, Justine Palfrey, he never asked my name until at the end of the day he offered to send me a book that would illustrate something we had been talking of, and then he let me write my address in a memorandum book; I never knew what his name was or where he lived till the book came, with a pretty inscription as a gift 'In memory of a delightful afternoon', with his name and address. It was years after that before I learned from a man who happened to know him that he was a teacher."

"I thought you could tell a teacher across the street."

"Not Mr. Marbeck. There was never a hint of giving instruction or of feeling that his opinion was better than mine. We were just comrades, good fellows together."

"With no introduction except a crowded car! I wouldn't have thought it of you, Doris."

"Why, before we got to Geneva I felt as if we had been boy and girl together. We both thought so much alike about things that I talked with him about matters that before I had only reflected upon by myself, and it was astonishing how the very telling cleared them up in my own

mind. When I hesitated he would suggest the rest, showing in what parallel lines our thoughts had run."

"All this, riding to Geneva?"

"It seemed such a short ride, but the train was behind and losing time. He was afraid we should miss connections, for he was going to Syracuse himself. It seemed the two stations were a mile apart, which I had not understood, and except for him I should have had to stay in Geneva. 'Luckily the Auburn road is always late,' he laughed, and sure enough we just caught a train twenty minutes slow. But we barely jumped aboard and there seemed no chance of supper before we got to Syracuse, two hours away."

"You surely didn't let him feed you!"

"We had the most delightful picnic you could dream of. He called up the train

boy and bought a supply of fruit and chocolate and peanuts, and gave him a dollar to jump off at the first station where there was any sort of a restaurant near by and get sandwiches and coffee. So we doubled our seat, and between us we managed to serve the food quite daintily, and both of us ate with great enjoyment."

"All this in a public train with a man you had never heard of three hours before!"

"Without a minute's hesitation or embarrassment, and knowing that every woman on the car envied me my escort."

"Doris Oldys! And at what point did he begin to make love to you?"

"He never thought of making love to me; I never thought of his doing it. I don't think he was married, for he made no reference to wife or children when if he had had them he would naturally have spoken of them. But it was not as a possible wife that he was nice to me. He was simply paying the tribute of a gentleman to a lady travelling alone whom he could assist."

III

"And who interested him."

"Yes, that was the joy of it, that I did interest so fine a man. Justine, except for meeting him that afternoon I should have married Barnaby Cone."

"You don't mean it, Doris."

"Yes, we girls were all brought up to marry, and Barnaby was as promising as any man in my environment. This little trip was really a sort of farewell to my girlhood, and I intended to say yes to Barnaby when I got back."

"That was a lucky escape."

"Yes, I doubt if he had any possibilities with any wife; he seems to me now a mere animal."

"What made you decide not to marry him?"

"A little anecdote Mr. Marbeck told incidentally of a man who was asked, 'Is your wife entertaining this winter?' and who replied wearily, 'Not very.'"

"How did that apply to Barnaby?"

"Perfectly. I had never been able to entertain him even while he was courting me. How could I hope to when we were married?"

"Had you no common interests?"

"If he ever had an original thought except about dogs and horses he never expressed it to me. He liked to get near me and touch me and was always trying to get closer in body, but he never had a desire to get closer in mind or soul."

"Was he really as gross as that then?"

"Yes. I supposed it was the man and woman of it, and that it was the only communion we could ever have. But I learned from Mr. Marbeck that there was another kind of intercourse between men and women and that I was fitted for it."

"So you wouldn't waste yourself on Barnaby."

"No, I gave him his final answer so positively that he accepted it."

IV

"Where did you meet Governor Oldys?"

"In Rome. My two aunts took me there that winter, somehow thinking I was depressed because my marriage had not come off. We sailed for Naples, and after three days there went to Rome for the winter, taking rooms at the Hotel Bristol and living quietly."

"I can imagine it was quiet with two aunts both over sixty years old and both widows of ministers of the Presbyterian church south."

"They were very kind, but it was wearisome. Their idea of sightseeing was to go somewhere in a carriage at ten, stay till half past eleven, and talk it over in the afternoon."

"Couldn't you go out alone?"

"No, they were too timid for me and felt sure Rome abounded in pitfalls. I kept hoping we should pick up acquaintances at the hotel but we did not run across any family parties I could attach myself to."

"But where did Governor Oldys come in?"

"At dinner I sat on the right of my aunts, and there had been next to me for

a few days a couple of fresh Oxford graduates off to see the world. They paid no attention to me, but their talk with each other was breezy and I was sorry to have them go. I feared some old dowager would be pushed up next to me, but instead it was Mr. Oldys. He bowed to us as he seated himself but offered no remark and evidently intended to think his own thoughts in silence."

"What broke the ice?"

"He was speaking only what he thought to be Italian to the waiter, who as in all first-class hotels assumed to understand him perfectly, but had difficulty when it came to the wine. Mr. Oldys ordered Lagrima Cristi. The waiter asked if he wanted it *spumante*. He had evidently not heard of sparkling Italian wines and thought the waiter misunderstood him, so

he repeated, 'Lagrima Cristi'. It led to considerable conversation, which though nominally in Italian revealed so much southern accent that when the waiter had gone my Aunt Lucinda asked, 'I beg pardon, but are you not from Alabama?' "

"A good guess, from a man's speaking Italian."

"Aunt Lucinda always was quick that way, and she was right. He replied courteously and gravely, 'I was born in Eufaula.' My aunt was so delighted that she replied with unusual forwardness, 'My niece was born at Cowikee.' He looked at me still gravely, and as gravely replied, 'Then your niece and I must be twins.'"

"That was startling enough."

"Aunt Lucinda was rather shocked, but she asked, as she was obliged to, for an explanation. 'We were born within ten miles and ten years of each other, madam,' he replied, 'end in view of the enormous distances here in Rome that is practical identity.' "

"He was certainly establishing a relation."

"I made up my mind that was just what he should do. This was the sort of droll view of things I had enjoyed so much in Mr. Marbeck, and if I had been able to interest Mr. Marbeck I could interest this man. I waited a little for him to go on with the conversation, and as he relapsed into silence and indifference I began to ask him what he had seen that day."

"It must have shocked your aunts!"

"Indeed it did. I really had to be persistent, for he was determined to avoid an acquaintance. But by great good luck he had seen this first day just what my

aunts and I had given most attention to and that I not only knew something about but had thought something about. I remembered Mr. Marbeck's advice, 'Always avoid the obvious,' and was careful to say nothing he could find in guide-books; but I gave him new points of view, and presently he began to tell what he had thought. By the contrefilet provencale he had turned to look at me, by the perdreaux rotis he had begun to smile, and with the pouding souffle we were comrades, and we lingered over the coffee."

"Did he follow you into the drawing-room?"

"He didn't, but he ascertained that we took breakfast down stairs at eight and he was there. He chatted delightfully, and I hoped he would propose accompanying us, but he did not. In fact we did not

see him at lunch, but at dinner he was on time and had brought down a hideously beautiful bronze statue he had bought at an auction."

"He was becoming confidential."

"My aunts looked at it enviously. 'How did you know about an auction?' Aunt Lovisa asked.

"'From the newspaper, to be sure,' he replied. 'Don't you have the morning journal?'

"'We could't read it; we haven't learned Italian yet.' And then I added wickedly, 'How did you pick it up so soon?'

"'I take foreign languages as I used to take children's diseases,' he replied, 'light attack and soon over; but while I have them I make them serve my purpose. Now take this sale.' He showed me the catalogue. 'Catalogo,' you can read that.'

'Catalogue.' I said. 'Della vendite.' I could guess that from my Latin, 'Of the sale.' 'Al Palazzetto Sciarra.' 'At the little Sciarra palace?' I hazarded. 'Yes. You see how easy it is.'

"Then he went through some of the pages, read the names of the articles, showed the prices he had marked, pointed out where the bronze statue came in, and explained that he had gone not so much to purchase as to see without restriction the interior of a Roman apartment of the better class. It made me realize how little I was seeing of Rome, or could see unless I could somehow persuade him to let me look with him."

"Well of all the impudence, Doris Oldys!"

"If I had not been impudent I should never have been Doris Oldys. It seems he had been jilted. After the wedding cake had been ordered the girl ran away with another fellow. He gave up Alabama and America and women and came over to Europe to travel solitary. He has since told me that nothing less positive than my determination could have prevented his sliding away into solitude again. But always I kept saying to myself, 'I interested Mr. Marbeck and I can interest him'; and I did."

"What happened first?"

"The next day was Sunday. At breakfast I asked him what his plans were and he said he was going to a horse-race."

"That must have ingratiated your aunts."

"It was his salvation. They were too shocked to expostulate, but I argued with him. He said it was the only time to see Roman society at its gayest; that it was his duty to go. I rejoined that there were higher duties, and that the seventh day was for rest, at least for something different."

"As a matter of fact he had the best of the argument, Doris."

"I really think so myself, but just as I felt defeated he yielded with charming courtesy and begged to be allowed to accompany us to chapel."

"And your aunts?"

"After that there was nothing he could not ask. We were all proud of his escort, he put a gold piece in the plate, and coming home he showed that he had pondered the sermon."

"And what reward did he ask?"

"A great one, I confess. The next day a season of opera opened at the Costanzi, and he begged to be allowed to take me." "Your aunt Lucinda never let you go to the opera!"

"She never had. In all my life I had never entered an opera-house or a theatre. But he told them the opera was Carmen, so vivid a picture of Spanish life that one might better have seen the opera and not have gone to Spain, than have gone to Spain and not seen the opera. Then he knew all the singers, and explained that opera was the medium through which great voices were made known in Italy. On Saturday he would have been pleading against a stone wall, but after that Sunday service they were ready to listen favorably to anything he said. They promised him a decision at dinner, but he bought the seats that morning."

"And you went?"

[&]quot;Justine, there can never be another

night in my life like that. The brilliant assemblage; the great orchestra; that fascinating music heard for the first time; the plot, the first I had ever seen on the stage; Carmen's seductive song; the torreador—O it was all an eestacy, and under and behind it a companion so sympathetic that every delight was doubled."

"Did he propose on the way home?"

"That was the beauty of it, he was like Mr. Marbeck in that. There wasn't a tinge of the personal, the sentimental. My aunts were sitting up to the unwonted hour in great anxiety, but they were relieved when we came in to see, as they well might, that we might be trusted anywhere without a chaperone."

"So after that you could go everywhere."

"Yes. We went twice more to the opera, Fra Diavolo, and Marie de Rohan, the only time I ever saw that; we saw La Fille de Madame Angot as a pantomime at the Metastasio, the music rushed through at a gallop; we even went to a circus in the mausoleum of Augustus."

"And you must have seen the churches and galleries together?"

"O yes. One of the first was St. Peter's. We rode over with my aunts, and then we two went up the dome while my aunts went to drive, to be back at noon. Such a funny thing happened there. When you get up into the dome there is still an ascent to the ball, and we wondered why the guard kept us back instead of letting us go up in turn. But we discovered. It seems we had to go up an erect ladder, and the guard wanted to have no one else but my escort there when I went up. Of course I had to go straight up over his

head, and I presume I blenched, but I did not hesitate a second, and I knew as well before as after that he would protect my skirts and never recognize an opportunity to take advantage."

"That was a test of the gentleman, to know he would not."

"Another memorable thing happened there. Everybody had to go down before noon, but we were enjoying the view so much that Mr. Oldys kept dropping lirepieces into the guard's hands. 'But my aunts,' I cried, suddenly remembering them. 'Sure enough, wait here,' he said; and before I could stop him he was going down the ladder and way down the church to the entrance where my aunts' carriage was waiting. He got their consent to go home without me, and climbed clear up into the ball again, just to have another quarter hour on top of St. Peter's."

"And no declaration after that?"

"Not a hint that we were more than fellow-travellers who knew how to see things while we had opportunity."

"But when did the proposal come?"

"He was going to Florence, and the night before, a delightful moonlit evening, we wandered down to the Fountain of Trevi to drink together of the waters, a sign that we should both return to Rome. I was feeling sad, for never in my life had I known such companionship, and though it could be no more than that I dreaded to let go of it. After we had sipped the water and as we stood there he said to me, 'The American ambassador called on your aunts this afternoon.' I wondered at the unusual honor. 'It must have been while we were at St. John Lateran,' I said. 'Yes. He called at my request. I asked him to tell

them what he knew of me and of my family, that I might ask them to permit me to beg you to be my wife."

"So sudden as that?"

"Exactly in those words. 'They have kindly consented,' he went on. 'and now I await my answer.' 'There will be no concealment and no hesitation,' I replied, as formally as he. 'It is a surprise, but it is a delightful surprise.' 'Your aunts have trusted me so fully,' he said, 'that I want to give you my first kiss before them.'"

"That may be stiff, but it was noble."

"It was noble, Justine, and from that day to this, dearly as we have always loved each other, there has always been even in his warmest caresses a certain punctilious respect and recognized privilege that few women know, and that I

can assure you is worth recognizing."
"You married without much delay."

"Yes, the moment we became engaged life took on a new interest for him. He hurried back to look after his plantation and get my home ready, and we were married in June. He jumped right into the questions of the day, was elected to the state senate, and after two terms became governor."

"And might go now to the United States senate."

"Yes. But he feels he cannot give up his work as governor till the platform on which he was elected is carried out in the legislature."

"How much he has done for Alabama!"

"Isn't it a noble old state? And to think if I had not met Mr. Marbeck on a train to Geneva I should have married Barnaby Cone, and Governor Oldys might still have been wanderingly discontentedly about Europe. I sent Mr. Marbeck a Christmas card this year, wondering if he would remember me, but I doubt it."

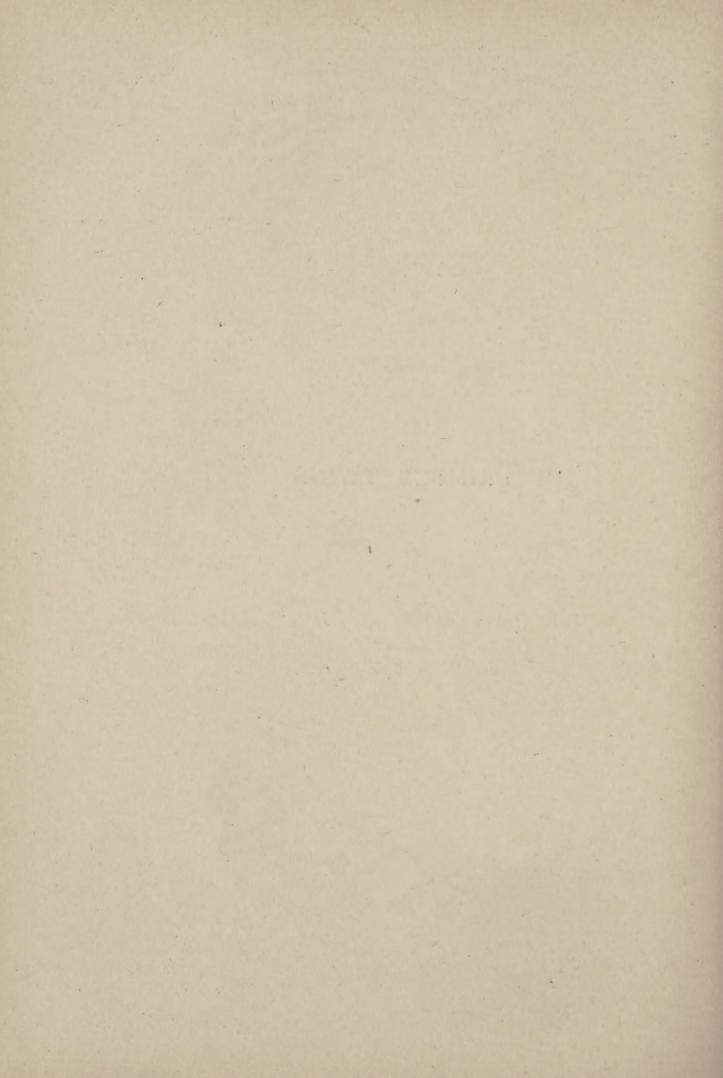
"As Mrs. Governor Oldys?"

"O no, he knew nothing of that name.
As Doris Boone."

X

"No, I haven't a remembrance connected with this name," said Mr. Marbeck, taking up the card again. "'Doris Boone.' I must have been just introduced to her somewhere."

THE TRIMBLE TWINS



THE TRIMBLE TWINS

I

"But you come so late," said Mr. Appleton. "Schools open Monday."

"The college kept telling us it could place us, and only this morning they advised us to come to you."

"The demand for inexperienced teachers of either music or drawing is supplied, so far as I know. Now if you could teach music and drawing--"

"But how can anybody teach music and drawing?" asked Penelope. "The whole make-up is so different. She might be a music teacher who knew a little about drawing, or a drawing teacher who knew a little about music, but she couldn't have

the gift, the training, the enthusiasm for both."

"There is much in that," admitted Mr. Appleton, "though we have some pretty fair teachers of both who really are not certain which they prefer when they have a chance to choose between them. Still, they are not artists in either."

"That's just it," broke in Dorinda. "We want to be artist teachers, to teach because we love what we teach and want to make others love it. I love singing. I love to teach little children to sing, but if I taught drawing it would be only perfunctory."

"And I couldn't teach singing," said Penelope; "I should have no patience. But I should love to give children the idea of expressing themselves by pictures."

"It is a pity Canterbury can't hire both of you," said Mr. Appleton; "it really needs you both, but it has an appropriation for only a single teacher."

"How much?" asked Penelope.

"Eight hundred dollars."

"Good school?"

"Excellent, on the Hudson, pleasant village."

"How is board?"

"Still at old rates, say six dollars, two in a room."

"We'll take it, "said Penelope decisively."

"Take what?"

"The place in music and drawing."

"Which of you will take it?"

"Both of us."

"But there is only one of it."

"And there will only be one salary for us: we can live on eight hundred dollars a year."

"You don't want to teach for four hun-

dred dollars apiece. I can get you five or six hundred before Christmas."

"And lose the eight hundred while we are waiting. No, Mr. Appleton, we want to get to work and show what we can do. We are economical; we boarded ourselves through college and have seen the time when there was only a cup of oat meal between us and starvation: and we thrived on it. It is worth a hundred dollars apiece to us to be together. Give us that Canterbury place and let us get started."

In a way it seemed impracticable, but it amused Mr. Appleton and when he found them in earnest and agreed he saw some promising features in the proposal. An hour of telephoning and it was agreed they should begin at once.

II

They proved a success from the start. To begin with, they were attractive They always dressed alike, and they looked so much alike that the principal laughingly gave them before the school a pair of little gold brooches, one a harp and the other an easel, begging them always to wear them so as to be distinguished. They had bright, merry faces, meeting everybody more than half way, liking and expecting to be liked, popular in school and out. Dorinda seemed an embodied spirit of song. She made her little ones love to sing: parents were astonished and delighted to hear their mites of girls and boys crooning to themselves at home the songs they had learned in school. Penelope made her children feel that drawing was a way of expressing themselves. "What is that flower I saw this morning?" a child would ask, and draw a picture which however crude gave her mother the distinguishing characteristics.

The previous teacher, a worn-out woman to whom both music and drawing were a burden, had inspired a universal dread of both, but the Canterbury children longed for the appearance of the Trimble twins. They had maintained the little joke, still saying, "We are the teacher of music and drawing." Before the first term was over the board had raised their salaries and quite determined never to let them go, now that it had discovered what it was to have real teachers.

III

They were inseparable. Outside of class work they were one. Their minds ran alike. In conversation the lead was as likely to be taken up by one as the other. Invitations always came to both, and both accepted or declined. After a dance each was taken back to the side of her sister.

No young man could accompany either home for they always went together, and the young man who called on either found himself paying equal attention to both. The one fear of the board, that either would marry, seemed groundless: no young man could get any hold upon either. Everybody blessed the day the new teacher of music and drawing came to Canterbury.

And yet there was a fly in the ointment.

IV

The Trimble twins were the delight and the despair of Canterbury. The delight because they were so charming and sympathetic; the despair because they were so inconsequent. Whenever by any blunder either of them might have done the right thing the other saved her from it.

What makes a blunder? Lack of sense of humor, is the usual answer but the Trimble

twins abounded in humor. The trouble was they did not develop the background. "Don't talk of halters to a man whose father has been hanged," warned Dr. Johnson, but if they were conversing with such a man by some perversity they would confine the subject to hemp.

When the English secretary visited the school Dorinda welcomed him with the Star-spangled banner, which was natural enough; but why since only two stanzas were sung did she select for the second that in which,

No refuge could save the hireling and slave

From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave.

When the organist of the Baptist church married and went to New York Dorinda succeeded her and gave the service a new peacefulness, a new sacredness. She followed the sermon with an offertory, usually original, that often brought tears to the young pastor's eyes as he felt how she had comprehended and echoed his thought; yet she was continually choosing the most inappropriate hymns. The old chestnuts were attributed to her, like "See the mighty hosts advancing, Satan leading on", when the deacon was heading the procession of Sunday school children, and "Mistaken souls that dream of heaven", at a wedding, but it needed neither memory nor imagination to chronicle her blunders.

Dorinda had no memory for faces. She knew her pupils but forgot their parents. "I am so glad to make your acquaintance, Mrs. Leach," she said to one lady who expected to be remembered, and who replied with fine sarcasm, "You dont' know what

a relief it is to hear you say so. That has been your remark the last four times we were introduced, but I am always fearful that next time you will be less anxious."

"You don't seem responsive to Mrs. Judge Forbush," someone said to her after she had greeted indifferently the most distinguished woman in town, not only wife of a justice of the court of appeals but an author popular in the magazines.

"Was that Mrs. Judge Forbush?" she asked in self-reproach, and the next time she met her was enthusiastic. "I so enjoyed your last story in the *Century* she said. "It seemed to me to have the real languorous touch of Alabama life." To which the lady said, "I am glad you liked the story, but I am Mrs. Bert Oliver."

Penelope remembered faces and their

stories, but was always mixing them up. To one lady whose husband she supposed to be in the aviation corps she remarked playfully, "What a new thing it is for wives to be proud that their husbands are high-fliers," only to learn that this woman had just secured a divorce from her husband on account of his relations with New York actresses.

V

Penelope had developed a singular skill in thumb-nail-sketch portraiture. Originally it had begun by showing her little people how important it was to keep the edges of the mouth up. When a youngster was sulky she would draw a face on the board with a cross expression, and show what a difference it made to turn the frown into a smile. Then she would impress that in youth the change could be made and the

habit fixed of either smiling or frowning, but that as one grew older the lines became fixed and the expression was fastened upon one. At first the illustration was only of a face, but she grew into the habit of discerning what characterized that child's face and so of drawing the face of the child she was correcting, till she acquired remarkable skill, and in a few strokes of the crayon could depict a face that all would recognize. Her interpretation was always generous, so that children were glad to be pictured, and these sketches were a marked feature of her school work.

When Mr. Woodbury, secretary of the board, became forty years old, his wife invited the teachers to dinner, and Penelope prepared one of these sketches of him, drawing it at first with crayon and retaining the few bold strokes, but copying it in oil

and putting in some background. She had thought nothing of it, bringing it rolled up in a newspaper, and expecting it to be thrown away after the entertainment, like a bouquet. But Mrs. Woodbury was so impressed by it that she burst into tears. "I did not suppose there was another person in the world who knew my husband like that," she sobbed, "his unwearied service and yet his underlying fun." She not only kept the portrait but she had it handsomely framed and hung in the diningroom. "Not because it is you, but because it is a wonderful work of art," she explained to her protesting husband.

VI

The first time Mr. Tait, the new editor of the Canterbury Chronicle, came to dinner he was impressed by this portrait. "It is wonderful," he said, "the underlying

principle of Japanese art at its best." He visited the school and saw illustrations of Penelope's rapid but sure sketching. Just then there was a struggle over a new schoolhouse. One was needed, the Education department had sent warning, condemnation by the district superintendent was threatened, but every proposition had been voted down by the workmen in the Ponsard process works, a big manufactory that employed more than half the men in the village. Mr. Ponsard himself spent little time in Canterbury. He had become wealthy and indifferent, thinking of his works here only as a money-producer, with instructions to his foreman to keep down expenses and especially taxation.

"Miss Trimble," Mr. Tait said to Penelope, "I believe you can help us to get that new schoolhouse." "How?" she asked wonderingly.

"There is to be a mass meeting Saturday night, where we hope to win over some of the Ponsard voters. The president of the board of education is to make a speech, Mr. Woodbury is to make a speech, I am going to say something, but you can help more than any of us by drawing a portrait of Mr. Ponsard on the blackboard. I will finish by saying, 'Miss Trimble will show you what stands in the way of our new schoolhouse', and then you draw a portrait with the Vanderbilt expression, 'The public be damned'."

"If you really think it would help," replied Penelope doubtfully, making a few tentative attempts with the crayon.

"Capital, capital." cried Mr. Tait enthusiastically, as the well-known features leaped out from the dozen strokes. "We shall have our new building."

VII

Alas, he had never thought of the Trimble genius for blundering.

The hall was full, the speeches had been made as arranged, and Mr. Tait sprang his surprise on the audience. "Miss Trimble will show you what stands in the way of our new schoolhouse," he said.

Mr. Woodruff, who loved the Trimble twins but had learned to dread their blunders, was apprehensive, but she came upon the platform full of enthusiasm and began her work with colored crayon and bold strokes. At first there was applause, then a deathly silence followed, and attempts to stop her. But she was absorbed in her picture and her rapid strokes evolved a strong portrait. As she gave the last touch and turned to show it to the audience she found it chilled with apprehension, and

following the direction of its eyes she looked to the door and there was Mr. Ponsard himself, who had come in just as she had approached the blackboard.

When she saw him she turned white and would have erased the offending figure, but he shouted "Stop!" so violently she dropped the eraser to the floor.

"We are done for this time," whispered Mr. Woodbury to his neighbor. "Why couldn't Tait have left the Trimbles out of it?"

But Mr. Ponsard came forward and examined the portrait critically. "In the office of our company in New York," he said, "there is a portrait of me by John Sargent that the company paid ten thousand dollars for. It doesn't look half as much like me as this three-minute sketch. That is a good piece of work, young woman:

it does you credit. A school that has teachers who can do things like that is a good school and deserves to be supported. The Ponsard works go on record as in favor of the entire appropriation the board asks for."

The audience rose to its feet and shouted. When the tumult had ceased Mr. Ponsard went on: "As for this portrait, it is too much a work of art to be lost. I want your young woman to reproduce it in oil, and I will give her a thousand dollars for it."

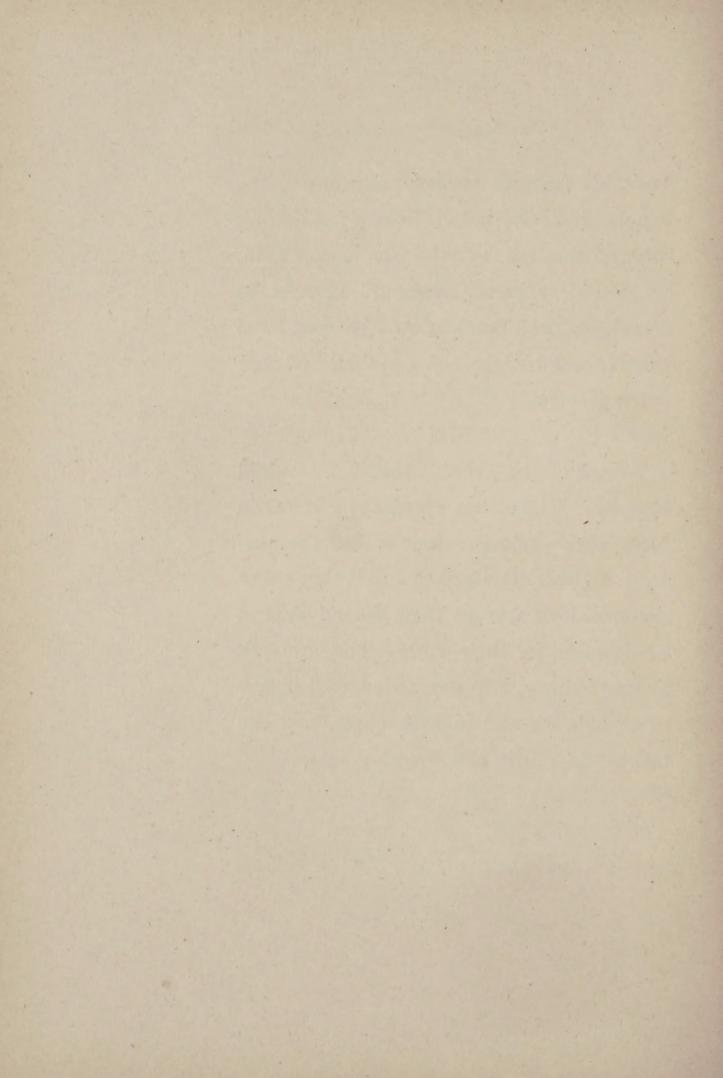
Penelope had listened with wondering eyes. "One minute," she cried: and before Mr. Ponsard could interfere she had turned half a dozen of the strokes and there was the same face transfigured, a philanthropist instead of a miser. "And even more like him!" shouted the enthusiastic crowd. Indeed as Mr. Ponsard looked at his por-

trait his features turned accordingly, the innate but overladen lines of kindness showed through, and he was a new man.

"My dear young woman," he said to Penelope, "you don't know what you have done for me tonight, but you shall find that I am grateful."

VIII

So one of the Trimble blunders resulted happily. The sisters spent the summer in New York while Penelope copied the portrait, and Mr. Ponsard saw to it that every opportunity came to them for advance in preparation for their work. They are still at Canterbury, still unmarried, still happy in their work and in each other, still the teacher of music and drawing.



A SUPERIOR WOMAN



A SUPERIOR WOMAN

T

Mr. Stanley was perhaps the most contented principal in the state of New York. He had come to Klopstock fresh from college, succeeding a man inefficient and unpopular, he had taken hold from the first, he had grown with the village, and after twenty years he was better liked than ever. He was an optimist, chereful, hopeful, looking for the best and finding it, easy perhaps in discipline but so genuinely kind that pupils seldom took advantage of him. The board entrusted to him all the details of school management. arranged his course of study, chose his text-books, hired his teachers, even fixed

their salaries. They adored him, as well they might. He selected them carefully. First a woman, then a lady, then as much more as I can get, he used to say, and he had a keen eye to get a great deal more. The teachers as a body were ready to do everything for the school, everything for one another. There was throughout the building an atmosphere of busy contentment. It was a happy place.

II

On Friday of the first week of the fall term Mr. Stanley called a special meeting of the board at his office. "A calamity has befallen us," he said. "Miss Roberval had a telegram this afternoon that her mother was killed and her father seriously injured in an automobile accident. She must resign and live at home."

"Have you any one in mind for the place?" asked the president.

"Not yet: she told me only a half-hour ago. We must have some one here Monday if possible; she was my right-hand man."

"Spend tomorrow telephoning, telegraphing, travelling if necessary," said the president. "Here, I will fill out a duplicate contract in blank. I will leave salary blank, too. Get somebody even if you have to add a hundred or two. We shan't easily find another preceptress like Miss Roberval."

III

When the two men were gone Mr. Stanley sat at his desk, thinking. There were two women whom he thought desirable and who could probably be had. Miss Popham was capable, could handle the subjects,

had the personal qualifications, but somehow he did not feel an inclination toward her; he doubted if she would quite fit into the atmosphere of the school. Miss Lanza had less experience and more faults, was less familiar with the special work; but there was a spirit about her he liked: he believed she would grow into the place better than Miss Popham. He had reached for the telephone to call her up when there was a knock at the door. "Come in," he said.

IV

A woman entered who was so conspicuously a lady that he rose and pushed a chair forward. She handed him a handsomely engraved card:

Miss Margaret Esty

"I have just learned that your preceptress has resigned," she said, "and I have called to apply for the place."

She? Apply for a place in this school? It seemed impossible. Her gown, her hat, her gloves, her shoes, all the little niceties of attire betokened expenditure far beyond the salary paid here. "I am afraid you do not know the salary is only eight hundred dollars," he said.

"I had been told that was the amount," she replied. "It is true I am accustomed to receiving more, but there are reasons that make me willing to accept that here. A small property recently bequeathed to me is near here and needs looking after."

But Mr. Stanley did not want her. She would not fit. She had too much manner. Mr. Stanley overflowed with courtesy but he deprecated manner. He wanted the simple, unobtrusive way of doing things. She would disturb the spirit of the school. He glanced at her card and

smiled inwardly. "She acts her Madge Esty," he thought.

But she went on: "I am a graduate of Vassar, and besides two years as governess I have taught five years in the Neplusultra seminary for girls in Washington. I presume you know the school."

Yes, he knew of it, a fashionable polishing place for daughters of men with more money than manners, especially congressmen. No, decidedly he did not want this woman, even in an emergency. "I am obliged to say Miss Roberval's successor has already been chosen," he replied.

"Has the bargain been made?" she asked, glancing at the blank contract that happened to lie open on the table.

Mr. Stanley was annoyed. In a way she was questioning his word. Besides, was this not inquisitive in a stranger, a forcing of reasons for rejecting her beyond the polite excuse offered?

"I was just about to telephone her when you came in," he said, rejoiced that at least this was true.

V

"Then there is still time," she answered, with a little smile of determination. "What subjects did Miss Roberval teach?"

It was wandering from the real question and in fact no concern of hers, but Mr. Stanley replied, "Ancient and mediaeval history, and art-appreciation."

"Exactly my own topics," cried Miss Esty. "How did she teach art?"

"In her history classes she took up every day the most famous pictures of the period, and on Friday afternoons she gave illustrated talks before the entire school."

"Just my work at Washington; I did not know any public school recognized its importance."

Mr. Stanley listened with more interest: this art-work was his own idea, his principal hobby.

"Do you have the Braun photographs?" she continued.

"Only three of life size, the Sistine madonna, the Mona Lisa, and the Immaculate conception."

"Which Immaculate conception?"

"Murillo's, of course."

"Yes, but which? The one in the Salon carré?"

"No, the one in the Louvre."

"The Salon carré is a room in the Louvre where the masterpieces are grouped. I presumed that was the one you meant. But at Madrid there are four of Murillo's

Immaculate conceptions hanging side by side, and at least one of them is superior to that you have. You need a Braun reproduction of at least that. Are you sure the Mona Lisa is a desirable picture for children to study?"

"Why, it is one of the great pictures."

"Assuredly, and so are some of Titian's Venuses that you would not want to hang in the schoolroom. But Mona Lisa has a crafty face: you would not want a daughter of yours to grow up with such a relation to life."

"I never thought of that. Perhaps there is something in it."

"Where does your Sistine madonna hang?"

"I will show you. Come this way."

He was getting ideas from her, learning about matters he had thought himself master of.

VI

The picture hung upon a side wall of the assembly room. "Well mounted," she mused, "the dark brown frame matches the picture. It should have a brown wall behind it. But, dear me, what surroundings; Boughton's Pilgrims on one side, Benjamin Franklin on the other, and class photographs sprinkled all over the wall. What can pupils see of the Sistine madonna?"

"The madonna was given by one class, the Boughton by another, and the Franklin by another," he faltered, as he saw how the picture was cheapened.

VII

She looked at the Mona Lisa and the Immaculate conception, and then asked, "How did Miss Roberval teach the other pictures?"

His eyes brightened. "That is an idea of my own," he said, "by card catalogues. We have five hundred strips of cardboard nine by twelve, and we encourage the children to bring us all reproductions they can find of great pictures. They get them from magazines, illustrated papers, photographs: sometimes they run across real engravings, fine ones. We paste these each upon its own card, sometimes several cards to a picture, and already the collection is fairly complete. We have fifteen cards for the Sistine madonna alone."

"May I see them?" she asked.

He was delighted to show them, for he believed he was the only one to whom it had occured to make such a collection. She looked them over.

"When you have such a beautiful and adequate picture as that Braun photo-

graph, do you think it adds to the child's appreciation to show him such distortions as these?" she asked, holding up a big daub from the *New York Undercut*, a coarse wood cut from a cheap guide, even a parody of Bill Tweed and a partner as the two cherubs.

He began to realize that such conceptions vulgarized the child's appreciation. But she went on: "The only possible purpose of such coarse representations is to give intellectual knowledge of the picture. A child who has seen these forty suggestions of the Sistine madonna will recognize the picture and can name it when it is shown. Some people think that is art appreciation. But suppose instead you have that Braun photograph alone upon a broad wall and study it and drink in its beauty and make it a part of your life, then you appreciate art. Do you remember Browning's

but much as we Down at the Bath-house love the sea, Who breathe its salt and bruise its sands: While—do but follow the fishing-gull That flaps and floats from wave to cave! There's the sea-lover, fair my friend!'

"To appreciate art, to love it, we must drink it in directly, not talk about it and gather up travesties of it and paste them together on card boards."

VIII

Mr. Stanley was humbled. His own knowledge of art was intellectual. He had never really got to Europe, often as he had planned to go, and he had never known the great pictures at first-hand.

She went on. "That is why I would teach art only from the Braun photographs, so perfect reproductions that they show even the texture of the canvas. You

cannot instill love of art by talking about When I first began to study the great galleries I spent what seemed a proportionate part of my time among the early pictures from a sense of duty, refreshing myself with modern pictures afterward; but little by little I discovered that it was the old pictures I went back to see over and over. In Munich there are two galleries, the Alte Pinakothek, where the old pictures are shown, and the Neue Pinakothek with the latest specimens of German art. The first week I was there I went faithfully day after day to the Alte, promising myself as reward the whole next week at the Neue. But after two days at the Neue I found myself wandering back to the Raphaels and Murillos and Rembrandts and Rubenses of the Alte. and I discovered that I really enjoyed the old pictures the best. But that was because I had seen them and studied them and drunk them in and made them a part of me. That is what we should do in school. Better a dozen pictures adequately shown and dwelt upon than five hundred talked about from caricatures in the newspapers."

IX

Mr. Stanley was thinking of more than art just then. Here was a superior woman. a preceptress that could lift the school to a higher level. Personally he did not like her. In her cold courtesy she held herself so high that one had to look up to her, recognizing that he was low. She would be a disturbing element in school; especially would she topple over the easy precedence he had always maintained. For his own comfort he might still better

right to deprive the school of such an uplift so unexpectedly offered? "If you will sign this contract," he said, "I shall be glad to have you begin Monday morning.",

X

From the first Miss Esty dominated. The superiority she had demonstrated in art gave her in Mr. Stanley's eyes the presumption of superiority in other matters, and he deferred to her. It had been the custom to have two desks on the platform of the assembly room, one for the principal and one for the preceptress; as children came up before and after school and at intermissions they consulted the principal as to matters of discipline and administration, and the preceptress as to their studies.

One day Miss Esty said to him, "Mr. Stanley, the pupils consider you an easy mark."

He knew it and laughed. "But they are moderate in their defrauding," he replied.

"Not so very. You permitted Ava Titman to go to his uncle's to get some eggs yesterday afternoon."

"Yes."

"He didn't go there: he went to the ballgame at Ipswich. I heard him laughing about it this morning."

Mr. Stanley was annoyed. He was aware that boys sometimes lied like that but he did not like to be informed of specific instances. "Suppose you take charge of the absences," he suggested.

"I shall be very glad to," she replied: and boys did not lie to her successfuly. That was perhaps an advantage, but it led to turning everything over to her desk. Mr. Stanley would sit undisturbed for twenty minutes while pupils stood three

or four deep to speak to her. Other matters that belonged to him were referred to her. At first she would send the pupil over to him, then she would call across and ask him, then she grew to decide it herself, until presently it became understood that it was she who determined things. She had assumed the authority of principal.

XI

Most of the teachers wondered but acquiesced. Miss Tate wondered and rebelled. Her predominant feeling was gratitude to Mr. Stanley for what he had done for her since as a child she first came to school. Her conception of God in heaven was based on her knowledge of Mr. Stanley on earth. That this new woman should undermine him and rule in his place seemed to her monstrous.

At first she hoped to prove Miss Esty an impostor, but investigation only proved that the preceptress was carefully truthful. She really had spent two years travelling in Europe with the family of a member of the president's cabinet, not only seeing what was worth while, but with such socia prestige that unusual doors were open to them. When the class went to Washington Miss Esty had accompanied as chaperone. She not only showed the utmost familiarity with the city, but she frequently met persons of distinction who recognized her with respect. Her knowledge proved remarkably accurate as well as extensive.

One afternoon the teachers were gathered for a conference, waiting for the principal, when a big rat, fourteen inches from nose to tail, came running in. The rest of them screamed and some jumped upon seats or even the tops of desks, but Miss Esty stepped to the only open door. "Walk out one by one," she said, "and we will lock the rat in here and let the janitor kill him." She walked out last, closed the door, and notified the janitor, who came up with a poker and killed it—evidently an estray, for anything larger than a mouse had never been seen in the building before and was never seen afterward. "She really is a superior woman," sighed Miss Tate: and hated her.

XII

"What are we doing about Red cross stamps?" asked Miss Esty of the principal one day.

"Not a great deal," he replied. "We teachers make up fifty or seventy-five dollars among ourselves, and we invite children who can conveniently do so to get

their friends to purchase, but we don't push the sale."

"Isn't that a mistake? It is a great charity. Some schools sell to every pupil, and prizes are offered. Our school ought not to be down at the foot of the list."

"I should be sorry to have every pupil in this school feel obliged to buy. There are many who have no money themselves and whose parents are struggling to pay their grocers bills."

"But they can ask their neighbors to buy."

"I don't think children should be sent out to solicit. I have been a book-agent, and I know it is embarrassing work even for grown-ups."

"Children have not the self-consciousness of grown-ups; they don't mind asking or being refused, and the people will give to them when they would be deaf to any one else. The collection of each one would be small, but in the aggregate the sum would be large, and it would help a worthy cause. I wish you would put the matter in my hands this year."

And Mr. Stanley, wearied of argument, weakly consented.

XIII

"Your room isn't doing much for the Red cross, Miss Tate," Miss Esty remarked.

"My children have collected all they ought to, Miss Esty," replied Miss Tate firmly. "I have bought five dollars worth, which is all I can afford, and some of these children have brought ten cents that I know their parents could not spare."

"All children who have not brought anything for the Red cross stand up," said Miss Esty to the school. Miss Tate waved them with her hand to keep their seats. "Excuse me," she said; "no other teacher has a right to give orders to my children."

"But I am preceptress of this school."

"And I am teacher of this room, and I will stand between my children and cruelty."

"It is not cruelty to ask a simple question."

"It is when the question implies and is meant to imply humiliation."

"I am put in charge of Red cross work by Mr. Stanley."

"You are not put in charge of this room by Mr. Stanley or by any one else, and I shall be glad to have you retire from it."

"Very well; this is your last day of teaching in this school."

XIV

After the children had gone that afternoon Miss Esty moved her chair over to Mr. Stanley's desk. He instinctively shrank from the interview. That approach meant another of Mrs. Caudle's lectures.

"Mr. Stanley," she began, "Miss Tate will have to be dismissed."

"Miss Tate?" he asked, unable to believe his ears. Even Miss Esty's sagacity failed to grasp what his tone implied.

"Yes," she said. "She was impudent to me this afternoon."

She expected his usual compliance, and was surprised to note in his voice a positive opposition. "I am not quite sure that word impudence applies among teachers," he said. "A pupil may be impudent to a teacher or any inferior to one in authority over him, but there can hardly be impu-

dence in the remark of one teacher to another. It may be rude, but not impudent."

"But I am preceptress," she said.

"That is not a distinction of rank, like lieutenant, captain, major. The preceptress has no authority not delegated to her."

Danger-signals were plentiful now in tone as well as words, in straightening up in the chair, in aggressive look of the eyes, but Miss Esty was too accustomed to dominate to be deflected.

"Perhaps you can judge for yourself: she ordered me out of her room."

"How did you happen to be there?"

"On Red cross business, which you entrusted to me."

"And you gave orders to her?"

"I asked those who had not contributed to stand up."

"And she would not permit it? Good for her. If she had I should have given her the severest reproof she has ever received."

"But Mr. Stanley--"

"There is no argument about that. Any method of collecting for a charity that involves compulsion and humiliation is an outrage, and shall never be used in my school with my consent."

XV

Was this the subservient Mr. Stanley talking? His eyes flashed and he was evidently too obstinate to be persuaded. So she turned to a flank attack. "But even if she ought not to have permitted it, she should not have been rude to me before her class. If a pupil should not be humiliated, should a teacher be?"

"It seems to have been a crisis, demanding immediate action. If I see that your gown has caught fire I don't stop to ask permission to put it out."

"But she commanded me before her class to leave her room."

"In her manner and language she may have been hasty, but I am sure she will be willing to apologize."

"An apology will not atone. A teacher capable of such language, even to an equal as you insist I am, should not be allowed to remain in school. If you do not dismiss her I shall appeal to the board of education."

XVI

Miss Esty had acquired great influence over the board as well as over the school: she might make trouble.

"Miss Esty," he said. "I am going to tell you something about Miss Tate."

Miss Esty leaned back resignedly. She

prided herself that she was always a lady.

"I first saw Miss Tate when her teacher sent word for me to come down to the primary room, where she had a child she could do nothing with."

Miss Esty nodded her head as if to say, "I should think very likely."

"She was seven years old and had been brought there by the truant officer, having hitherto eluded observation. She was wild with terror and anger. It took me some time and some agility to catch her, and when I lifted her into my arms she fought me like an angry cat; I really came near losing an eye. For a week I spent considerable of my time in that room, and when she was finally convinced that we were her friends and there was much of interest and profit in school, I looked into her history.

"She was the daughter of a dissolute chambermaid at the hotel. Probably even her mother did not know who her father was. Within a year the mother died; the child was brought up by her grandmother, a well-meaning woman but weak; the child would very likely have followed in its mother's footsteps had not some of us in school been able to throw other influences about her. The grandmother kept in a loose way a small grocery store. When she was taken ill I looked after the store, putting in a man I could trust, advancing money to pay notes and bills and keep up the stock, so that when the grandmother died I sold the business for enough to give the girl a normal school education, after which I took her into school as a teacher."

"It is interesting to know that Miss Tate

is the illegitimate daughter of a prostitute," said Miss Esty icily, "and shows from what sources you recruit your teachers: but it gives all the more reason for discharging her."

"Do you think so, Miss Esty? Discharge for her would be ruin. Think how she started life in with everything against her, heritage, tendencies, inclinations, for she had has a great deal to overcome. She is very quick-tempered, and if she only told you to leave the room it shows how she has gained mastery of herself: the first year she taught she would have assisted you."

"Pretty creature to have in school," injected Miss Esty.

"She is a brand saved from the burning, a girl with infinite possibilities for harm who has yet become perhaps our very best teacher, knowing every one of her pupils in school and out, devoted to them, loved by them, their friend long after they have gone from her room, a power for good in the homes of some of what but for her would be the most degraded tenements in town.

"Now let us assume that she spoke to you too vigorously, even impolitely. I will answer that she makes suitable apology—for her heat, not for her action, which I approve—and suppose we let the matter drop right here. With you it is a question of dignity: with her it is a question of life. Do not show yourself ready to destroy a soul because she was angered in defence of her children."

"Are you quite finished?" asked Miss Esty. "Because if you are I repeat that as you refuse to discharge Miss Tate I shall appeal to the board to do so; and

incidentally I shall point out that a woman of her origin has no place in a public school. I will guarantee that she will be dismissed."

XVII

But it did not work that way. There was nothing new to the board in the story of Milly Tate's early life except the unsympathetic way in which Miss Esty told it, every member knew what an influence for good Miss Tate exerted in the community, and every one had been more or less annoyed by the aggressive way in which pupils had been compelled to sell Red cross stamps; so it was moved and carried unanimously that as Miss Esty had closed by saying that there was not room for her and Miss Tate in the same school and as Miss Tate was considered indispensable, the place of preceptress be declared vacant.

